84 Vaishnav Stories

✿ Jagadguru Mahaprabhu Shri Vallabhacharya (1479-1531 CE) ✿

(English Edition)

84 Vaishnav Stories

Revealed by Shri Gokulnathji

Composed by Goswami Shri Harirai Mahaprabhuji

(With the Sentiment of Three Births')

Adhyasampadak

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Overview and Significance

The present text is a highly revered scripture of the Vallabh Sampradaya. It is widely known in the tradition by the name “The Stories of 84 Vaishnavas with the Sentiment of Three Births’ Pastimes”. There is probably no place in all of India where at least one copy of this text cannot be found among Vaishnavas. This alone gives a clear idea of its vast reach and popularity.

Manuscript Witnesses and Printed Edition

We have come across numerous handwritten copies of this text in places such as Shri Gokul, Mathura, Giriraj, Shri Nathdwara, Siddhpur, Patan, Ahmedabad, Baroda, Dabhoi, Sankheda, Bahadarpur, and others. Among these, there are copies written in the Vikram Samvat years 1752, 1778, 1804, 1825, 1896, 1900, and 1940. In all these versions, the language and context remain consistent. The printed edition presented here has been prepared from the manuscript of Vikram Samvat 1752.

Daily Recitation and Spiritual Impact

This text is recited daily with great devotion in the Vaishnava congregations that regularly gather within the Sampradaya. Just as the singing of the Ashtachhap kirtans moistens the hearts of emotional devotees with devotion and fills them with bliss, in the same way, the reading and recitation of this text often stirs profound devotional feelings, goosebumps, joy, and deep humility among the devotees. This is a unique quality of this text.

Literary and Historical Value

A study of this narrative literature reveals that this work is an expanded form of the original “Talks of 84 Vaishnavas”. In this version, there is further explanation and clarification of the deep principles, sentiments, and traditional elements presented in the original text. Therefore, from the perspective of the Sampradaya, this text holds even greater significance than the original “Talks of 84 Vaishnavas.” This work also contains detailed biographies of many great poets, such as the celebrated poet-emperor Surdas and several lesser-known yet eminent poets from different regions of India, who

composed in Brajbhasha. Thus, this text is also regarded as valuable and desirable in the field of Hindi literature.

Here, we find one of the earliest and most refined forms of Brajbhasha Hindi prose. From a linguistic perspective as well, this text provides a solid foundation for scholars of Hindi literature. Additionally, the text offers fascinating and authentic descriptions of the religious, social, and political circumstances of that time. Therefore, it is a useful resource for studies in those fields as well.

Establishing the Text's Authenticity

In this way, this "Talks" text stands before us radiating its multifaceted brilliance. No steadfast scholar or researcher from any discipline can afford to neglect or disregard this work. Due to its immense value and widespread utility, this text deserves a place of honor in all areas of study. Therefore, it is essential to establish its authenticity through internal and external evidence.

As is evident from its popularity within the Sampradaya, the references to all ancient manuscripts, and the internal contents of the text itself, this work is the embodiment of the sentiments spoken by Goswami Shri Harirayji. This is further corroborated by contemporary external evidence. (Note: Another copy from 1804 is in the possession of Dr. Deendayalu Gupta, M.A., Head of the Hindi Department, Lucknow University.)

Poetic Testimonies and External Corroborations

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चौरासी चत्र लावीने, करे पाठ नत्य धरी नेम । पिुष्ट पंथ प्रभु प्रसन्न थाये, हदे बाढ़े प्रेम ।।

Bringing 84 stories, reciting them daily with firm discipline. In the Pushti Path, the Lord

becomes pleased, and love fills the heart.

कृपा श्रीह ररायजी करी दीन जाणी दास । मूल चौरासी भक्न नां ते, नामकया प्रकास ॥।

By the grace of Shri Harirayji, who saw this servant as humble, The names of the original

eighty-four devotees were revealed and illuminated.

श्री आचायजी महाप्रभु नां, अंग द्वादश जेह । धम साथे धम क हये, साथ द्वादश तेह ।

Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's twelve divine associates— With righteousness they are

called righteous, together with those twelve.

चोराशी ब्रजकोस माटे, चौराशी ए भक्त। प्रेम लक्षणा पूरी पूरे, श्रीवल्लभ पद आसक्त ।।

For the eighty-four Braj Kos, there are eighty-four such devotees, Perfect in the qualities

of love, devoted entirely to Shri Vallabh's feet.

ए वैष्णव पद कमल रज, रत्ती तणी आस । गाय गुण ह रदास ना, पद रज "श्रीवल्लभदास ॥।"

The dust of those Vaishnavas' lotus feet, even a speck, is my aspiration. Singing the

glories of the Lord's servants, I, "Shrivallabhadas," remain attached to their feet.

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This poem, which contains the pastime-related names of the 84 Vaishnavas, was composed by Kakavallabhji. Kakavallabhji has created many compositions in both Brajbhasha and Gujarati under the pen names "Shrivallabh" and "Das." Many of his works in Brajbhasha and Gujarati have also been published in books such as Vividha Dhol Pad from Ahmedabad, Bombay, and other places. He was born in Vikram Samvat 1703 in Braj. Thus, he was a contemporary of Goswami Shri Harirayji, who remained on this earth until Vikram Samvat 1772. Kakavallabhji also had Brahmasambandh from Shri Harirayji.

Therefore, his above-mentioned dhol is considered authentic, as it serves as a contemporary external testimony. The validity of his statement is further confirmed by the following excerpt from the book Pushti Bhakt Malika, composed by the last renowned poet-emperor of Gujarat, Shri Dayaram, in Vikram Samvat 1833.

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श्रीमहाप्रभु के अ त प्रय, चौरासी जो भक्त। श्रीराधावर रूप में, िजनको मन आसक्त ।।

The eighty-four devotees who are most beloved to Shri Mahaprabhu,

Whose minds are absorbed in Shri Radhavara's form.

सो श्री गोकुलनाथजी, कहे सबन के नाम। वरनी सबकी वारता जा त ज्ञा त अरु नाम ॥।

Those names of all were spoken by Shri Gokulnathji,

Describing each one's Varta—their caste, lineage, and names.

तामें कछु संदेह रहे, लीला में को रुप । सोहू श्रीह ररायजी, कहे प्रगट स्वरूप ॥।

Where there was any doubt about the form in the Leela,

Even that was revealed clearly by Shri Harirayji.

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Internal and External Evidence of Authorship

In this as well, the Leela-related names of the Vaishnavas have been mentioned according to this Varta text. From the above statements, it becomes certain that this Bhavana-filled Varta was composed by Goswami Shri Harirayji. This fact is especially confirmed by the internal evidence of the text in the following ways:

Goswami Shri Harirayji was present on this earth until Vikram Samvat 1772. Therefore, this text, written in Vikram Samvat 1752, is contemporary to him. On this basis, we must accept that during his lifetime, these Vartas had already become known in society under his name. Thus, it is not possible that during his time, any text could have wrongly used his name. Nor is it possible that his name was misattributed. It is also not possible that a text popularized under his name would not have been seen by him. (See Dhol Pad published by Mahadev Ramchand Jagushta, Ahmedabad, and Rasik Vividha Dhol Pad Sangrah published by Shastri Basantaram Harikrishna, Ahmedabad. See Vallabh Vanshavriksha and Vanshavali. See Dayaram Kavya Manimala published from Bombay and Dabhoi, etc.)

In two or three places in the text, it is written as follows: "Now the Varta of the eighty-four Vaishnavas was revealed by Shri Gokulnathji; the sentiments of which Shri Harirayji speaks, these are written." "Now in the Varta of Shri Acharyaji's eighty-four Vaishnavas, the deep meanings spoken by Shri Gokulnathji, there Shri Harirayji expresses some sentiments." The final Pushpika also clearly states this.

From these three writings, the following points become clear. The present text is an explanation of the original eighty-four Vartas, as

spoken by Goswami Shri Harirayji. The word “Now” also indicates that this text is part of a sequential narration of daily discourses. This is further confirmed by the following excerpts at the start of each Varta: “Now the Varta of the sevak of Shri Acharyaji… his sentiments are spoken.” The titles of each Varta in the text also suggest that Shri Harirayji used to speak the sentiments of one or two Vartas each day in his discourses. And all of these were written down exactly as spoken by someone present at the time. The earlier quotes, “Shri Harirayji speaks, these are written” and “Shri Harirayji expresses some sentiments,” use present-tense verbs, which clearly indicate contemporary writing. This will be discussed in detail further.

In one place in the text, there is a direct reference to Shri Harirayji as follows: “This new beauty, at the time of feeding milk—‘I,’ Shri Harirayji, is filled with wonder.” This mention also supports that these are direct statements from Shri Harirayji and further strengthens the evidence of contemporary writing already discussed.

In many places, the text contains quotations from Shri Harirayji’s own writings, such as Shiksha Patra, clarifying the deep doctrinal aspects of the Vartas and confirming them through research. For example: Varta Sutra – “Then Govinddas, once again overcome by ego, said—” In the Sampradaya, ego is considered contrary to the humble sevaks attitude of surrender. Thus, analyzing this doctrinally, the following from Shiksha Patra is cited to reinforce this: “Why is ego opposed to the sevaks attitude?—Because if one day service is abandoned out of ego, then Thakurji will not allow service. This principle is shown. Therefore, in Shiksha Patra it is written: ‘Asadhan sadhanovan…’” This indicates how many are unsuited for sadhana, many perform it outwardly, some are sattvic saints, some are rajasic non-saints; but those who remain firm in surrender day and night, they alone surely attain the Lord.

In the printed titles of each Varta in this text, the words “speak” or “express” have been omitted, as explained elsewhere. The confirmation that more than one Varta or topic was spoken daily is also seen from the use of “And” at the beginning of some Vartas, e.g., “The Varta of Mavji Patel.”

Another example from Varta Sutra: “So that Brahmin asked the other Mukunddas, saying, ‘Whenever you say, then Bhagavat will be recited’—but as that person was not a follower of the path, the narration was not heard from his mouth.” Bhav Prakash – “Thus in the Chhassath Aparadh it is written: ‘To listen to Bhagavat from non-Vaishnavas leads to three births as a tree.’” Here too, Shri Harirayji

confirms the authenticity of his own statement about the 66 offenses by referencing Varta Sutra. This not only highlights the significance of the Vartas but also shows that the doctrinal principles expressed in Shri Harirayji's texts are often the result of deep reflection on Varta literature.

The commentary on Shiksha Patra by Shri Harirayji's brother, Goswami Shri Gopeshwarji, further supports this, as it uses examples from Vartas throughout to clarify Shiksha Patra's principles. This demonstrates the depth and authenticity of the Varta literature. Doctrinal references in these Vartas show that no one other than Shri Harirayji could confirm the essence of the Sampradaya's revered texts like Shiksha Patra with such authority. To suggest otherwise would diminish the importance of Varta and elevate Shiksha Patra or other texts unfairly. The repeated use of the word "therefore" (taten) in earlier citations clearly indicates that Shiksha Patra was considered secondary. From the time of their composition, Shiksha Patra and other texts have been respected equally to Vartas within the Sampradaya. Thus, no Vaishnava or Goswami who reveres Shri Harirayji would present his writings as secondary using the word "therefore."

Hence, we must conclude that Bhav Prakash was indeed composed by Goswami Shri Harirayji. Since Shri Harirayji accepted the Vartas as the authoritative words of his Guru Shri Gokulnathji, it was natural for him to confirm his own statements with Varta references. Likewise, his clarifications of the subtle principles in the Vartas, and their investigation in his other works, align with his deep respect for them.

Literary Style and Theological Depth of Goswami Shri

Harirayji

Goswami Shri Harirayji was a great poet and commentator in Sanskrit, Brajbhasha, Gujarati, Marwari, and Punjabi. This is evident from his compositions in these languages. As a poet, it was natural for poetic brilliance to appear in his language. In many parts of this Varta text, we find such examples: "Later, Shri Acharyaji asked Damodardas—Did you bring the letter?" (Varta of Damodardas Sambhalware) and "His parents and family felt no affection for him, as if he were a son born without eyes." (Varta of Surdas)

Similarly, his discourses in this text contain an instructive tone: "This

Varta shows the principle that if a Pushtimargiya Vaishnava's Thakurji comes to their house, no different sentiment should be kept." "This Varta expresses the principle that if a loving devotee celebrates a festival near their Thakurji, the Lord remains pleased."

The prose style of this text closely resembles that of Shri Harirayji's other works, as seen here: Bhavanavali Nijvarta – "There Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu sat down to study with Narayan Bhatt, who was an incarnation of Sage Sandilya. The Bhakti Sutras composed by Sandilya Rishi are regarded as authoritative. Acharyaji learned all four Vedas, eighteen Puranas, and all scriptures in four months. One may doubt, 'If Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu is Purna Purushottam, why study at all?' But just as Shri Krishna studied at the ashram of Sandipani Rishi, he studied here for four months too." Bhavanavali Ghruvarta – "Therefore Shri Gusainji said in the Sarvottam Granth that the essence of all Thakurji's pastimes is the Rasa Lila, for it is the ultimate fruit of all pastimes. Thus, in Nikunj Lila, where love fills every moment, Acharyaji Mahaprabhu remains immersed."

Similar sentiments appear in many other Bhavana texts by Shri Harirayji, forming a collective volume as vast as Sursagar. This also proves that all Vartas known to the Sampradaya were explained with such sentiments by a long-lived figure like Shri Harirayji, who lived for 125 years.

It is clear from Shri Harirayji's Sanskrit texts that his method of presenting subjects was always in the style of Purvapaksha (objection) and Uttarapaksha (answer). For example, in Nishkama Leela Granth, the beginning Purvapaksha asks: "Here, Bhagavan's Leela is described as desireless. Is this appropriate? Desire is bound to the material body, so attributing such a Leela to Bhagavan would seem to impose materiality on Him." The resolution follows. This same style appears throughout this Varta text as well. For example: "There is much doubt in this Varta… here the sentiment should be understood."

"There is much doubt in this Varta: why did Seth Sera leave and go south? There it is said…" This consistent use of such a style also confirms that the author of this Varta text is Goswami Shri Harirayji himself.

This text contains many invaluable elements of the Sampradaya, literature, history, and geography. These reveal the author's exceptional scholarship, extensive knowledge, love of literature, and worldly travels. Due to space, only a few examples can be mentioned. The Sampradaya-related facts in this text show the author's deep

knowledge of the Vedas, Shastras, Puranas, Jyotish, Bhagavat, Nibandha, Subodhini, and many other texts of Mahaprabhu and Shri Vithaleshji. These elements also demonstrate the author's mastery of Shuddhadvaita philosophy and the devotional practices of the Sampradaya.

Philosophical and Doctrinal Insights

In several places in the Bhav Prakash, the author presents Mahaprabhu's fourfold stages of Pushti: Prem (Love), Asakti (Attachment), Vyasan (Intense longing), and Tanmayata (Absorption). These are illustrated along with practices in the Bhav Prakash of various Vartas. Prem corresponds to the stage of Pushti flow, Asakti to Pushti discipline, Vyasan to Pushti-pushti, and Tanmayata to Shuddha Pushti.

In the stage of Asakti, the author beautifully explains how to maintain scriptural boundaries during service, especially in the Bhav Prakash of Surdas's and Kumbhandas's Vartas. In the Vyasan stage, breaking these boundaries due to overwhelming love is described in the Bhav Prakash of Vartas like Gajan-Dhavan and the courtesan. In the Tanmayata stage, the state of complete surrender (Tadiyatva) is illustrated in the Vartas of Damodardas and Achyutadas.

The author also presents in a systematic and clear manner the four pillars of the Sampradaya: Praman (authority), Prameya (doctrinal truths), Sadhan (means), and Phal (result). His ability to weave together deep doctrinal analysis and practical illustrations demonstrates that the commentator of this text must be a deeply realized Acharya—an authority in both knowledge and service. Shri Harirayji's maturity in Sampradaya knowledge, his greatness as a spiritual guide, and his expertise in the rasa of devotional service are already evident from his other works. This confirms beyond doubt that this text was indeed spoken by him.

Comparison with Other Acharyas and Proof of Authorship

In the Sampradaya, only three Acharyas have revealed the inner sentiments (Bhavana) of Pushti Bhakti and personally written them down in their Sanskrit and Brajbhasha works. These three Acharyas are Shri Gokulnathji (Vikram Samvat 1607–1967), Shri Harirayji (Vikram Samvat 1647–1772), and Shri Dwarkeshji (Vikram Samvat 1751–around 1800). Except for these three Acharyas, no one else in

the Sampradaya has independently composed and written such works until today. The presence of Leela Bhavana and other sentiments in this text clearly proves that its author is Goswami Shri Harirayji.

Many statements in this text align directly with verses in Shri Harirayji's Sanskrit texts. For example, Bhav Prakash states: "Thus, only Damodardas's body is visible, but Shri Acharyaji's divine presence remains within him all the time, speaking through his mouth. Therefore, Shri Gusainji says, 'This Varta was spoken by Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu through you.'" This is also confirmed historically. Damodardas is believed to have been constantly filled with Mahaprabhu's divine presence. This is supported in Shringar Ras Mandan where Shri Vithaleshji himself acknowledges Damodardas's role in helping him understand the secrets of the Sampradaya.

Hence, the statements made by Damodardas are accepted as Mahaprabhu's own words. This is further confirmed by Shri Harirayji's Sanskrit verse in Swamargiya Seva Phal Nirupan: "Shri Matprabhostu Taddanam Acharyebhyo Na Sanshayah" meaning "The gift of Pushti Bhakti from the lotus feet of Shri Prabhu was indeed received through the Acharyas—there is no doubt."

Bhav Prakash also states: "And Shri Acharyaji's twelve limbs are of divine form." Here Shri Harirayji describes Acharyaji as being of Bhagavan's nature. Again in Bhav Prakash: "In all secret Leelas, Shri Swaminiji's obedient companion is Lalitaji. Similarly, here Damodardas is the obedient Lalita form to Shri Acharyaji." Here and elsewhere, Shri Harirayji portrays Acharyaji in both Swaminiji's and Bhagavan's forms. This dual portrayal also appears in his Sanskrit works: "Swamini Bhavasamyukta Bhagavad Bhava Bhavitah, Atyalaukika Murti Shrivallabhah Sharanam Mama" (Shrivallabha Sharanashtaka) meaning "Shri Vallabh, whose form is infused with Swamini's mood and Bhagavan's sentiment, is my refuge."

Bhav Prakash further emphasizes: "Serving a Vaishnava is extremely rare. Even serving Thakurji and Guru as their sevak is easier; but serving a Vaishnava as a sevak of the sevak is very difficult. This principle is shown." Shri Harirayji clarifies the same in Shiksha Patra and his Kirtans: "Tadiyeshu cha tabuddhya bharah sthapyo visheshatah. Yatha dutishu bhavati vishayinam mati statha." (Patra 1/19) meaning "Hold special reverence for the Lord's devotees, just as worldly people give importance to messengers." This text contains valuable references to religious, literary, historical, and geographical aspects, highlighting the author's extensive travels, scholarly mastery, and deep literary sense. For example, the text describes in detail the

practices of Pushti Bhakti as they were observed in different regions. It provides rare insights into social and devotional customs of the time. It mentions specific places in Braj and beyond, reflecting the author's firsthand knowledge.

All these features—poetic brilliance, instructive tone, matching prose style, doctrinal depth, and the presentation style—unmistakably confirm that the Bhavana-filled Varta text was indeed composed by Goswami Shri Harirayji. Goswami Shri Harirayji, even while being an Acharya himself, displays such servitude towards the exclusive Vallabhiya Vaishnavas.

Harirayji's Devotional Sentiments Toward Vaishnavas

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ये नत्यं प रभावयिन्त चरणौ श्रीवल्लभ स्वा मनो ।

ये वा तद् गुणगान सेवनपरा ये सिन्न ध स्था यनः ।।

ये वा तद् गत भाव भा वत मनो मोदिान्वताः सन्ततं ।

तेषामेव सदास्तु दास्जमपरं कंवा फलं जन्मनः ।।

"Those who constantly meditate upon the feet of Shri Vallabh Swami,

Those who are devoted to singing His qualities and serving Him,

Those who remain in His presence,

And those whose minds are absorbed in His moods, filled with joy at all times—

May I forever remain their humble servant;

What greater fruit could there be from this birth?"

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In this way, through the entire "Dasyashtak" text, Shri Harirayji has expressed his wish to be a servant of his Vallabhis, the followers of Vallabhacharya. He writes with deep devotion: "I would give myself to these Vallabhis. Make my body their bed, and lay my head at their feet." These sentiments clearly reveal Shri Harirayji's deep affection for the Vaishnavas. In his view, serving the Vaishnavas was equally

important. Only such virtuous and noble personalities could have spoken the previously quoted lines from Bhav Prakash.

Bhav Prakash also states: “Therefore, the initiation of Brahmasambandh (divine relation) should happen only within the Vallabh lineage. Elsewhere, it will not bear fruit.” This means that Brahmasambandh must be received from the Vallabh lineage for surrender to be considered complete. Goswami Shri Harirayji emphasized the same in his text “Swamargiya Sharan Samarpan Sevaadi Nirupan”: “Tatraadau sharanam yaatah kim kuryaditi chocyate. Shrimadacharyamargiya gurunam sharanam gatah.” He again instructs to take refuge in a Guru from Shri Vallabhacharya’s lineage. Bhav Prakash further advises: “So it is said, one must fulfill the duties of the Guru in every possible way. Serving the Guru and satisfying him is essential.” This is also reflected in Shri Harirayji’s “Swamarg Maryada Nirupan”: “Yatha kathaṅcit sva-swami santoshotpādanam hitam. Tasmin tuṣṭe phalam sarvam siddham eva na samshayaha.”

Internal Goswami Traditions and Private Family Details

This text contains intimate domestic details about the Goswamis, which could only have been known to them. For instance, Shri Gusainji established the tradition of fasting at the big house, the home of his first son Shri Giridharji, among the seven Lalji temples, while elsewhere the festival was celebrated by breaking the fast. In another account, in a small form, Shri Acharyaji’s chin touched the head of Shri Thakurji, and they transformed into large forms. These forms bore the marks of Shri Yamunaji, Giriraj, the sakhās, sakhīs, cows, kunj (groves), Chaurasi Kos, and so on. Shri Acharyaji named them Shri Mathuranathji.

There is mention of a garland called ‘Madhavdas’, which even today at Shrinavneetpriya’s place is recognized by this name. On another occasion, the text notes a night that was the muhurat (auspicious time) of Shri Gusainji’s manifestation in the womb, celebrated secretly on Chaitra Vad Navami at various places. It describes how from that day kheer (rice pudding) is made in the Anasakhdi vessel for daily offerings but not during the Kheer festival. There are also coded domestic terms in the text, such as “the second form” referring to Shri Swamini and others. These details, along with knowledge of Mahaprabhu’s treasures, his texts, and poetry from that era, prove that only the Goswamis could have authored this work.

The devotional mood (bhavana) expressed in the text is extraordinary. Knowledge of which Vaishnav exists in what form in the divine play can only arise from direct realization of Bhagavad Leela. Shri Harirayji's writings and character show that he experienced direct vision of God and his pastimes. No matter how clever, without such experience, one cannot create such a harmonious and profound description aligned with Sampradaya's principles. This strongly supports the conclusion that Goswami Shri Harirayji is the author.

Literary, Historical, and Geographical Evidence

From beginning to end, the text reflects the author's deep love for literature and poetry. His efforts to gather rare literary works of poets like Prabhudas Bhat and Tripuradas Kayasth reveal this. Shri Harirayji was not only a lover of literature but a poet himself, composing countless works in Sanskrit, Braj, and other languages, both in prose and poetry.

Though not presented as a historical account, the text is rich with historical facts. After thorough investigation, these facts are confirmed by internal evidence and reliable contemporary external sources. For example, Surdas's blindness from birth is affirmed through lines such as "Eyes untouched by light, and day never dawned" and "Much cruelty befell Surdas, even his eyes were harmed." It is stated clearly: "Sur's fate was cruel; he sat blind from birth." Surdas also left home in childhood and delayed his surrender, as seen in descriptions of his wandering and longing. He was born in Sihi village, four kos from Delhi, in the house of a Saraswat Brahmin, and abandoned his caste pride for devotion. Before surrendering, he sang songs of longing and eventually brought his heart to the lotus feet of Vallabhacharya, praying: "O Shri Vallabh, save me this time too. Your name purifies even the most fallen; I am the most wretched, with no refuge but you."

Paramananddas received visions of Shri Krishna's form through Shri Acharyaji's grace. He found Shri Vallabh with great effort and saw Shrinavneetpriyaji by his grace. His surrender is described: "Now my heart has come to this state; I offer my body." Paramananddas longed to move from Adel to Braj and to serve Shri Nathji's kirtan. Overwhelmed with emotion at Gokul Ghat, he prayed to be ferried across to Nandakumar, promising even his garland in gratitude.

Kumbhandas's varta mentions his fondness for the dense forest of Toṇḍ and an episode at Sikri where he was instructed to work. These and other historical details are analyzed in works like "Ashtachhap

aur Unke Siddhant."

Krishnadas's surrender is expressed as he makes Shri Vallabh his refuge and serves with joyful kirtan in Shri Nathji's temple. Episodes of his conflict with Shri Gusainji and eventual forgiveness are vivid: "Krishnadas turned from divine to demonic, then from demonic back to divine by touching the feet."

Together, these internal evidences establish the historical authenticity of the text. The knowledge of Mahaprabhu's treasures, sacred texts, and poetry of prominent poets could only have belonged to the Goswami lineage at that time. The unique devotional mood (Leela Bhavana) expressed in this work reflects a profound spiritual experience. Shri Harirayji's direct realizations and his literary genius combine to create a narrative of remarkable depth and consistency, perfectly aligned with Sampradaya's principles. Thus, it is firmly established that the author of this text is Goswami Shri Harirayji.

Geographical Descriptions and Travel Evidence

Geographical Description: In the same way, the authenticity of the geographical descriptions in this text is also proven by today's geography. While considering this, it is important to keep in mind that at that time, there were no maps available that indicated locations in Hindustan and the paths to reach them as we have today. Therefore, based on experience and travel, this text describes places, pilgrimage sites, and routes, many of which are still confirmed by modern maps.

There are several pilgrimage sites and villages mentioned whose names are not easily known today, such as Vad, Choila, Mada, Pipri village, Amitirth, Prithodak Tirth, and other distant and lesser-known places and pilgrimage sites. The list of these names is provided elsewhere in this text. Thus, it must be believed that the author of the text must have traveled extensively throughout India and collected historical and geographical elements for inclusion here.

Goswami Shri Harirayji indeed traveled widely across India. This can be understood not only from his family traditions and the method of propagating the sect but also from his "baithaks" (seats of discourse) and from the works available in various languages attributed to him. Therefore, it must be accepted that only an Acharya with such wide knowledge and a love for literature like Shri Harirayji could be the author of this text. In all respects, the evidence confirms that Goswami Shri Harirayji is indeed the author of this text.

Structure, Writing, and Style of Composition

Now, it also seems necessary to consider the structure, writing, and prose style of this text.

Structure: The first question is: In what form should we accept this text? From the opening statements and the title of each discourse in the text, it is undoubtedly clear that this is an expanded version of the 84 Vaishnavas' discourses spoken by Goswami Shri Gokulnathji. Thus, in one sense, this text can be considered a dependent commentary on the 84 discourses. However, this text also contains some special characters and sentiments that allow us to call it an independent interpretation of the discourses. Even in the original 84 discourses, there are often explanatory comments after nearly every sentence, which further supports its independent form. Thus, this text is a mixed form that includes both a commentary clarifying the original 84 discourses and an independent interpretation expanding on them. Therefore, it is particularly appropriate to regard this entire text as Shri Harirayji's independent interpretation because even independent interpretations naturally include clarifications of the original discourses.

Writing: Now the question arises: how was this text written? From the study of the text, the answer becomes clear: In the opening line "kahat hain so likhyate" (it is said, and so it is written) and in the beginning of each discourse "ab Shri Acharyaji ke sevak... ki varta ko bhav kahte hain" (now the discourse of Shri Acharyaji's sevak... is called a 'bhav'), the use of present-tense verbs indicates that the text was written down contemporaneously during the discourses themselves. This is further confirmed by direct expressions from Shri Harirayji such as "main balihari jat hoon" (I am utterly devoted), which point to real-time recording. Thus, the study of the text proves that it was written down immediately as the discourses took place. One might wonder whether such quick writing was possible at that time. To answer this, it is necessary to understand the different forms of discourses given by Goswami Shri Harirayji. Shri Harirayji's discourses were of two types: public storytelling and private discourses. This is consistent with the lecture styles of his ancestors as well. From Mahaprabhuji to Shri Gokulnathji and even later descendants, this style has continued. As a result, many vachnamrit (nectar-like sayings), discourses, and sentiment-filled texts exist in the sect. The list of these is provided elsewhere in this text. After narrating the Subodhini katha,

Mahaprabhuji would hold private discussions with his principal and intimate sevak Damodardas Harsani. Similarly, Shri Gusainji and Chacha Harivansh, Shri Gokulnathji and Kalyan Bhatt, and Shri Harirayji and Harjivandas engaged in private discourses. References to these are found in the 84, 252, and other vachnamrit texts. Since the time of Shri Gokulnathji, the practice of writing down private discourses immediately has existed in the sect. Some examples are given here:

Examples of Contemporary Writing

1. Shri Gokulnathji's handwritten vachnamrit –

   "One time in Samvat 1690, Posh Vadi 6 at night, this was written during the sixth hour."

2. "On Hagasir Vadi 12, Shri Mahaprabhuji, along with Bhatt Kalyan Khambaliya,

   narrated a supreme discourse."

A modern example:

3. Shri Giridhar Lalji's vachnamrit (Samvat 1933) –

   "One time, Shri Goswami Shri Purushottamji and Shri Giridhar Lalji Maharaj

   were pleased and, on Posh Shukla 10, Monday, they asked their sevak Amtha Khushaldas to sit nearby. With great mercy, they instructed him to write down the vachnamrit."

These examples make it clear that during private discourses, intimate sevaks present would, upon permission, write down the discourses in real time. These private discourses did not flow like public lectures but were more like question-and-answer sessions explaining finer points to close disciples. Hence, there was no need for rapid shorthand writing.

Consideration of a Doubt: Now, we can raise another doubt. Could it not be that instead of being written down immediately during the discourses, a person with extraordinary memory listened to Shri Harirayji's private discourses every day and then went home and wrote them down, thereby creating this text? It is necessary to examine this doubt carefully. This theory raises two objections—one from the perspective of language and one from the perspective of

time. From the perspective of language: If we assume that Shri Harirayji's words were recorded later by a person in his own style, then naturally, there would be variations and inconsistencies in the language compared to Shri Harirayji's accepted manner of speaking. However, no such fault is visible anywhere in this text. From the perspective of time: This objection arises because the language of this text matches the language of other large works of sentiments by Shri Harirayji, some of which have already been quoted earlier. Therefore, the person who wrote all these works would need to have been exceptionally long-lived and in continuous close contact with Shri Harirayji, which appears entirely impossible. No such person is found in the available history of Shri Harirayji either. Thus, it is appropriate to conclude that, following Shri Harirayji's wishes and instructions, suitable individuals present at different times wrote down the various discourses and interpretations. These were then reviewed by Shri Harirayji himself and shared with authorized individuals. As a result, this text achieved wide circulation and prestige within the Vaishnav community, which continues even today.

The Role of the Acharya

Based on the history of Vallabhi Vaishnavs' devotion to their Gurus, it is authentic to believe that the author of this text must have been a great Goswami Acharya. Otherwise, it is highly unlikely that a text written by an ordinary Vaishnav would gain such respect and wide acceptance within the community.

Consideration of Prose Language and Antiquity

Now, let us consider the prose language of this text.

Some Hindi scholars express doubts about its antiquity. They say the language of this text is so mature and refined that it doesn't appear to belong to ancient times. However, these scholars have no evidence beyond their assumptions. In contrast, the sect possesses numerous solid proofs that not only establish the antiquity of this language but also help trace its gradual development in prose form. These proofs are as follows:

1. Shri Vallabhacharyaji (Samvat 1535–1587)

Mahaprabhuji's text on the 84 offenses is available within the sect, but as it is not currently in our possession, we are unable to provide its excerpt here.

2. Goswami Vitthalnathji (Samvat 1572–1642)

A letter: "Swasti Shri Vitthal Dikshit among the righteous Vaishnavas, to Krishnadas, offering blessings. We hope for your well-being. We received your news through your letter. Always maintain devotion at the feet of the Lord. Even if worldly sorrows befall you, consider them to be the Lord's wish. Know that all is under His control and do not be troubled. Worship the Lord's lotus feet as the ultimate goal of both this world and the next. What more needs to be said?"

3. Shri Gokulnathji (Samvat 1608–1697)

In his vachnamrit: "One time, during a discourse, Shri Mahaprabhuji gave the order: 'When Tulsi Das, adhering to the Maryada (path of rules), asked a question, I gave this reply...'" The Hindi literary histories often quote a commentary on Shringara Ras Mandan attributed to Goswami Vitthalnathji, but these are inaccurate and misleading. The true form of Goswami's language is preserved in this letter, the original copy of which is housed at Ghatulalji's temple in Bombay.

4. Shri Harirayji (Samvat 1647–1772)

From Pushti Dridhavali: "Just as Hanumanji discarded the pearl necklace because it bore no name of Ramchandraji, in the same way, if one cannot sing the praises of the Lord, one should withdraw. This is the dharma of a devoted wife. Similarly, in Meera Bai's home, when

the kirtan was taking place, Shri Acharyaji's hymns were sung. Meera Bai then requested, 'Now sing the hymns of Shri Thakurji.' Hearing this, Ramdas Vaishnav said, 'O widow! Whose hymns are you singing? I will not even look at your face!' Thereupon, he gathered his family and left the village." This extensive narrative explains how one should not even drink water without first receiving charanamrit (water sanctified by washing the Lord's feet), citing the example of sevak Tripurdas Kayastha. The text also emphasizes that Vaishnavs must maintain love for fellow Vaishnavs, giving the example of Mohandas and Haridas, both sevaks of Shri Gusainji. In this way, this text includes narratives about the 32 symptoms of a true devotee and discourses covering 252 topics.

5. Goswami Shri Gopeshwarji (Younger brother of Shri Harirayji; Samvat 1649–1750 approx.)

In his commentary on Shikshapatra, letter 3, verse 8, he writes: "Do not listen to the teachings of other paths, nor perform any actions belonging to other sects. This is illustrated in the story of Govind Dubey. Once, Govind Dubey went to Meera Bai's house. Meera Bai treated him with honor and respect and kept him there. Though Meera Bai was a devotee of God, she did not belong to the Pushtimarg of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu but followed the Maryada path. When Shri Gusainji learned that Govind Dubey was at Meera Bai's house, he composed the following verse: 'Bhagavat-pada-padma-paraga-jusho na hi yukti-param marano'pi taram.'" In commentary on Shikshapatra 3, verse 11, he mentions: "The commentary on Shri Sarvottam was written by Shri Gokulnathji. There it is stated that Padmanabhdas and others like him are rare devotees of God." In commentary on Shikshapatra 36, verse 13, he writes: "A true Lord cannot bear to see His devotee's suffering and will immediately remove any obstacles troubling them." The Sampradaya Kalpadum also lists works composed by Shri Harirayji, including Pushti Dridhavali, which is referred to as: 'Pushti Dridhavali granth kiya gadyarath ur dhaar.' – Letter 164

6. A Contemporary sevak of Shri Harirayji

A letter says: "Swasti Shri Harirayasya, the most revered among Yadavendra Bhatt, Madhusudan Bhatt, Gopikant, and others. May there be peace. Regarding your letter, it was received through the courier Khepiya Kasid, and we have sent our response back through him. Whatever your thoughts may be after reading, do as you see fit. Mathuranath Bhai is with Thakurji, who is currently near a lake in Rana's land. Rana has suggested giving another village. So far, they

have not settled there. What more can be said?" Another part of the letter reads: "Keep Jamuna Devi pleased. You have inquired greatly from our side." – Collected by Vasantram Shastri, Ahmedabad

7. Kakaji Vallabhji (Samvat 1728–1780 approx.)

He composed 52 vachnamrit that have been printed. (At present, we do not have access to these texts and therefore cannot provide quotations here.)

8. Goswami Shri Dwarkeshji (of Bhavna fame; Samvat 1751–1800 approx.) In his Bhav Bhavana: "Shri Gokulnathji had a renowned reputation. Once there was competition over the establishment of a garland, and he established it firmly. This fame remains well-known." On Shri Raghunathji: "When Tulsidas came to Shri Gokul, he requested Shri Gusainji, 'Please grant me the vision of Shri Ramchandraji along with Sita Ji.' At that very time, Raghunathji's wedding had taken place, and he was standing near Janaki Bahuji. Shri Gusainji then gave the order, 'Grant Tulsidas a vision.' Accordingly, Shri Raghunathji and Janaki Bahuji appeared to Tulsidas. In his joy, Tulsidas sang this kirtan: 'Barano Avadh Shri Gokul Gaam, Uha Sarju Iha Shri Yamuna Ek Hi Lakh Thaam.'" This demonstrates the profound faith in Shri Gusainji's instructions. (Published by Vasantram Shastri, Ahmedabad, Samvat 1993)

9. Goswami Shri Dwarkeshji (Gannuji)

He authored Saptaswarupotsav, a large text in Brajbhasha that has been published from Ahmedabad. However, we do not currently have access to this text and are unable to provide excerpts.

10. Chatuji Maharaj (Author of Shri Giridhar Lalji's 120 Vachnamrit) An excerpt: "These words were spoken by Krishnadasji: 'The demon turned divine upon touching the feet.' If even such great souls were hindered by offenses against the Guru, then what can be said of others? In this kirtan, two principles are established: never make distinctions between Shri Thakurji and Shri Gurudev, and never commit offenses against Shri Gurudev. Later, Shri Gusainji arranged for them to perform Shraddha at Dhruvghat and also had an unfinished well completed, which is still famous in Krishnadasji's discourse (Vachnamrit 107)."

11. Shri Gokuladhishji (approx. 1876–1925)

"Shri Mathureshji resided on Padmanabhdasji's head, so Tulsi became very affectionate. He would spend all day resting in Tulsi's lap and

give her various joys. When Tulsi grew up and was married, her in-laws came to take her. She became deeply sorrowful and asked, ‘How can this body survive without Shri Mathureshji?’ She became extremely worried. At that moment, Shri Mathureshji appeared before her and said, ‘Do not worry, I will come with you.’ Hearing these words, Tulsi’s entire being was filled with bliss. Morning came.” (Vachnamrit 20)

12. Shri Govardhanlalji’s Vachnamrit (1919–1974)

“One time, Shri Kakaji Maharaj said: ‘Earlier, the Brahmasambandh of the 84 and 252 Vaishnavas used to happen instantly, and the Lord’s grace was also bestowed quickly. The reason was that those souls, during the Saraswat Kalpa, had been gopis and cowherds in Mahaprabhuji’s and Shri Gusainji’s service. Thus, they were purified and confirmed in Pushti by Mahaprabhuji and Shri Gusainji.’” (Vachnamrit 24, published Ujjain, Samvat 1919)

Insights from These Brajbhasha Prose Texts Origin and Divine Purpose of the Eighty-Four

1. The entire credit for the creation, development, and spread of Brajbhasha prose

    goes to the Vallabh Sampradaya because no other tradition offers comparable prose literature.

2. The refined form of Brajbhasha prose begins from the time of Shri Gokulnathji.

3. In the Brajbhasha of the Goswami class, Sanskrit words and usages dominate.

4. Even the Goswami Acharyas regarded the 84 and 252 Vaishnavas’ discourses as

    authentic.

These excerpts reveal not only the antiquity of the language of the discourses but also their established prestige within the Sampradaya.

Dwarkadas Parikh - Mathura (Samvat 2005, Radhastami)

Vaishnavas

Now the discourse of the eighty-four Vaishnavas was revealed by Shri Gokulnathji. The feelings spoken by Shri Harirayji are being written down.

Bhav Prakash composed by Shri Harirayji: The reason for the eighty-four Vaishnavas is this: the divine souls who had fallen into the eighty-four lakh species of life were to be rescued. For this purpose, eighty-four Vaishnavas were created. Those souls are of eighty-four types. There are four types of souls fallen on earth – Rajasic (passion-dominated), Tamasic (ignorance-dominated), Sattvic (goodness-dominated), and Nirguna (beyond qualities). Among them, the souls filled with qualities – Rajasic, Tamasic, and Sattvic – were left for Shri Gusainji to liberate.

Shri Acharyaji could not remain without Shri Govardhandhar (the lifter of Govardhan Hill); therefore, he revealed eighty-four Vaishnavas from his innermost Nirguna group. From each lakh species, one Vaishnav of the Nirguna category was revealed to uplift the souls through these Vaishnavas.

And in the science of rasa (divine aesthetics), eighty-four kinds of seats for rasa-related pastimes have been described. Accordingly, these eighty-four Vaishnavas are forms of divine sentiments manifested in various parts and are Nirguna in relation to the Rasa Leela of Shri Thakurji. They are parts of Shri Thakurji's own divine body. Therefore, according to scriptural rules, their seats and sentiments are extraordinary and supernatural.

The twelve parts of Shri Acharyaji are of the nature of divine forms. In each part, there are seven dharmas (divine qualities): Aishwarya (sovereignty), Virya (heroism), Yasha (fame), Shri (wealth and prosperity), Jnana (knowledge), Vairagya (detachment) – these six qualities – and a seventh quality as the unifier. In this way, the twelve multiplied by seven create eighty-four Vaishnavas, who are extraordinary manifestations of Shri Acharyaji's own parts and are embodiments of all divine powers.

And the direct divine play (Leela) of the complete Supreme Purushottam (God) is within the eighty-four kos of Braj. Accepting each soul, rescuing the divine souls who had fallen into the eighty-

four lakh species, and granting them attainment of the divine Braj Leela, these eighty-four Vaishnavas were revealed as supernatural manifestations. In this way, the eighty-four Vaishnavas belong to Shri Acharyaji.

One day, while Shri Gokulnathji was narrating the stories of the eighty-four Vaishnavas, there arose great auspiciousness. Immersed in the company of the Vaishnavas, they all became absorbed in the bliss of rasa. As a result, the recitation of the Shri Subodhiniji's katha (discourse) did not take place, and night fell while they remained in that state. At that point, one Vaishnav made a humble request to Shri Gokulnathji "O Maharajadhiraj! When will you narrate the katha today? It is already past midnight." Then from his holy mouth Shri Gokulnathji spoke: "Today we will speak about the fruit of the katha. Know that in the Vaishnavas' discourses lies the entire fruit. Beyond Vaishnavas there is nothing else to attain. This is Pushtimarg, and it bears fruit only through Vaishnavas. Shri Acharyaji himself said: 'Damala! I have revealed this path for you.' Therefore, know that the discourse of Vaishnavas is supreme. In this way, the eighty-four Vaishnavas are known as the heads of Shri Acharyaji's Nirguna circle.

Now, regarding the Rajasic, Tamasic, and Sattvic souls filled with qualities – for their deliverance Shri Gusainji created eighty-four Rajasic Vaishnavas, eighty-four Tamasic Vaishnavas, and eighty-four Sattvic Vaishnavas. These three groups together make two hundred and fifty-two Vaishnavas connected with Shri Gusainji's divine parts. In this manner, Shri Acharyaji and Shri Gusainji spoke of the sentiments of their sevaks.

Now, in the discourses about Shri Acharyaji's eighty-four Vaishnavas, Shri Gokulnathji has revealed profound meanings, and there Shri Harirayji expresses some sentiments for the sake of making Pushtimargiya Vaishnavas understand.

Varta 1 - Damodardas Harsani

Now the first sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was Damodardas, whom Shri Acharyaji called “Damala.” His discourse and its sentiment are spoken of here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing of the Sentiment): Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu called Damodardas “Damala.” From this, one may think that “Damala” means “Amala” (pure), removing impurity. But there may arise a doubt: if ordinary Vaishnavas are already free of impurity, then what is the purpose of calling Damodardas by a name that signifies impurity (Mala) being removed? It is said that in the path of devotion, when there is love for Shri Thakurji, then one is called “Amala” (pure). But when there is even greater love for Shri Acharyaji than for Shri Thakurji, then such a person is truly “Amala.”

Damodardas had steadfast and unwavering love for Shri Acharyaji. Once, Shri Acharyaji was lying down with his head resting in Damodardas’s lap. At that time, Shri Govardhandhar himself manifested. Damodardas stopped him, saying: “Do not come near, Mahaprabhuji will awaken.” Such was his firm sentiment that even after getting up, he did not bow to Shri Thakurji.

And when Shri Gusainji asked, “Why do you say Shri Thakurji is less?” Damodardas replied: “Is the donor greater, or the one who gives gifts greater? The donor can give wherever he wishes, and he can keep the gifts wherever he likes.” This was his firm understanding. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji called him “Damala.”

There was not even the slightest trace of any other relationship (worldly attachment) in him. That is why he is called “Amala” (pure).

His name is Damodardas because, in the “Purushottama Sahasranama” (the Thousand Names of Purushottam), Shri Acharyaji says: “Damodaro Bhaktavashyo” (Damodar is under the control of his devotees). And in Shri Subodhiniji this is elaborated further It is written: The Supreme Purushottam himself was seen to be under the control of his devotees. He could not free himself from his bonds, and he revealed his form as a Braj devotee to Yashodaji. Yashodaji is such a great devotee that she bound Shri Thakurji. Seeing the agreement of those devotees, he allowed himself to be bound because the ropes were brought by the Braj devotees. But Yashodaji herself did not have

the strength to untie those bonds. When the Yamalarjuna trees fell and there was a great commotion, then the Braj devotees released the ropes. Therefore, Yashodaji is greater than Shri Thakurji, and the Braj devotees are greater than Shri Damodarji. In this way, he manifested his quality of being affectionate to devotees (bhakt-vatsalata).

In the same way, Damodardas – whose name also bears the name Damodar – was such an exclusive devotee that Shri Acharyaji was under his control. Therefore, he said: "Damala! I have revealed this path for you." This means that although there are many devotees, it was shown that Shri Acharyaji resides within you.

And Damodardas's divine form was revealed as that of Lalitaji. There, in all the secret pastimes, just as Lalitaji is the obedient one to Shri Swaminiji, in the same way here Damodardas, in the form of Lalita, is the obedient one to Shri Acharyaji. From birth itself he was a celibate in the form of a sakhi (female companion), never knowing the life of a householder.

This sentiment of Lalitaji is to be understood in the context of this narration—

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(राग केदारो | Raga Kedaro)

हँ स हैं स दूध पीवत नाथ। मधुर कोमल बचन क ह क ह, प्रानप्यारी साथ ॥१॥

Smiling and smiling, the Lord drinks milk. Speaking sweet and gentle words again and

again, together with his dearest beloved. □1□

कनक कटोरा भरयो अमृत, दयो ल लता हाथ। ला डली अचवाय पहले, पाछें आप अघात ॥ २॥

A golden bowl filled with nectar was given into Lalita's hand. The beloved first fed it

playfully, then she herself drank afterward. □2□

चंताम न चत्त वस्यो सजनी नर ख पय मु सकात। स्यामा स्याम की नवल छ व प र "र सक" ब ल ब ल जात

॥३॥

The wish-fulfilling gem (Chintamani) has settled in my heart, my friend, seeing the

Beloved smiling. In the fresh and beautiful form of Shyama-Shyam, “Rasik” surrenders

again and again. 3

✿✿✿

The meaning of this is that both divine forms, adorned with jewels, are seated upon a jewel-studded bed. There, Lalitaji, covering the milk in a golden bowl and adding fragrant sugar, brought it in. Then Lalitaji thought: “Both divine forms are seated here. If I first give the bowl into Shri Swaminiji’s hand, she will feed Shri Thakurji and then partake herself. In this way, my intention will not be fulfilled. But if I give the bowl into Shri Thakurji’s hand, then first Shri Swaminiji will partake and afterward Shri Thakurji will drink.”

Therefore, she placed the bowl of milk into Shri Thakurji’s hand. At that time, it is said: “The beloved first tasted it playfully, and then she herself drank afterward.” From his hand, she partook. From his hand, the Chintamani form of Shri Thakurji entered the heart of Shri Swaminiji. Therefore, when Shri Swaminiji partook, Shri Thakurji became satisfied.

Seeing Lalitaji’s loving cleverness in this way, Shri Thakurji smiled. This fresh, beautiful scene of drinking milk was so delightful that Shri Harirayji says he surrenders again and again to its charm.

In the same way, this kind of sentiment exists in Damodardas towards Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Therefore, he did not take up any separate service of Shri Thakurji. For him, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu is Thakur himself. This is “Manasi Sa Paramata” – he was qualified for manasi (mental) service. He remained absorbed in the rasa (nectar) of divine pastimes.

Prasang 1 - Damodardas The Pure and Steadfast Devotee

Later, at one time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu himself set foot in Braj. Damodardas was with him. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu used to call Damodardas “Damala” and would say: “Damala! This path has been revealed for you.”

There, in Gokul, on a platform above Govind Ghat, Shri Acharyaji was resting under a tree. Nearby was the temple of Shri Dwarikanathji. At that time, a worry arose in Shri Acharyaji’s mind. The worry was

because Shri Thakurji had given him the command: “Establish Brahmasambandh (spiritual connection with God) for the souls.”

So Shri Acharyaji began to think: “The souls are full of faults, and Shri Purnapurushottam (the complete Supreme Lord) is the treasure house of virtues. How can such a relationship between them take place?” This thought caused him deep concern, and he became extremely anxious.

At that very moment, Shri Thakurji instantly manifested before Shri Acharyaji and asked: “Why are you so anxious?” Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu replied: “You already know the nature of the souls; they are full of faults. How can there be a relationship between such souls and yourself?”

Shri Thakurji said: “When you give the souls a name (Brahmasambandh), all their faults will be removed. Therefore, you should accept the souls.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The concern for the deliverance of the souls also arose because: if someone has attained the supreme object, he naturally enjoys happiness in accepting it. But how can the Beloved be made to accept an inferior object—souls full of faults? This is the method of this path.

Moreover, in the world there are great souls who themselves establish Brahmasambandh (spiritual connection with God). In this way, if even one soul in the world gains firm faith, then, by the command from Shri Thakurji’s holy mouth, Brahmasambandh is established.

Through this, firm faith is instilled in the souls—that Shri Acharyaji has given his word: “Whosoever receives Brahmasambandh will never be abandoned.” Because of this greatness, the souls will enter into Brahmasambandh. This was conveyed by Shri Thakurji.

This event took place on the night of Shravana Sudi Ekadashi, at midnight. The next morning was the sacred day of Dwadashi. Therefore, the sacred thread (Pavitra) had already been prepared and sanctified, and the Pavitra was worn. The letters from that time were later compiled by Shri Acharyaji into the book “Siddhant Rahasya.”

At that time, Damodardas was sleeping some distance away. Shri Acharyaji asked Damodardas: “Damala! Did you hear anything?” Then Damodardas replied: “Maharaj, I did hear Shri Thakurji’s words, but I did not understand them.”

Then Shri Acharyaji himself said: “Shri Thakurji has commanded me: ‘You must perform Brahmasambandh for the souls. I will accept them. And those to whom you give the name (initiation), all their faults will be removed. Therefore, you must certainly perform Brahmasambandh.’”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Damodardas said: “I heard Shri Thakurji’s words, but I did not understand them.” The reason for this is explained thus: in the Eleventh Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, Shri Thakurji says that even after hearing His words, they may not be understood by one’s own effort; only when the Guru bestows grace does understanding arise. Therefore, when Shri Thakurji spoke, Damodardas did not understand immediately, as he was the sevak of Shri Acharyaji. When Shri Acharyaji himself explained, only then could Damodardas understand.

This also shows that firm knowledge in the heart arises only through the Guru’s grace, and it reveals the relationship of Master and Servant. If Damodardas had said he understood, it would appear as if his knowledge equaled Shri Acharyaji’s. So he said, “I did not understand.” Or perhaps he meant, “I did not understand, for what use would it be for me to understand on my own? It is for you to speak and for me to understand through you.”

And while narrating this katha, Shri Acharyaji said to Damodardas. “Damala! It has been a long time, and you have not spoken of Shri Thakurji’s discourse.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is that Shri Thakurji’s discourse was not narrated by Damodardas himself, who is in the form of Shri Swaminiji and in the form of Lalita Sakhi. The secret and intimate discourse about Shri Thakurji—regarding their meeting and the first episode of such divine pastimes—was not narrated.

Therefore, in front of everyone, it was said in this way during the narration of the katha: that the discourse about Shri Thakurji was not spoken.

Prasang 2 - Mahaprabhu’s Concern and the Revelation of

Brahmasambandh

And Shri Acharyaji prayed three times before Shri Thakurji: “Let Damodardas’s body not leave before me.”

The reason for this was that Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu himself was contemplating taking sannyasa (renunciation). At that time, Shri Gopinathji and Shri Gusainji, the two brothers, were still children. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu explained the entire discourse of the path (Pushtimarg) to Damodardas and established it firmly through him.

Damodardas kept nothing secret from Shri Acharyaji.

And Shri Acharyaji would read the Shrimad Bhagavatam day and night, narrating its stories, and Damodardas would listen. All the principles of the path and the secrets of Bhagavan’s pastimes were established by Shri Acharyaji in the heart of Damodardas.

After establishing the path in Damodardas’s heart, some days later Shri Acharyaji himself took sannyasa. Then, some days afterward, Shri Gusainji asked Shri Akkaji: “The path which Shri Acharyaji has revealed—what is the proper way to celebrate its festivals? We do not know anything.”

Then Akkaji replied: “The details of the path and the manner of the festivals have all been explained to Damodardas. You should ask him. He will tell you everything.”

After that, Shri Gusainji came to Damodardas’s house. Damodardas received him with great honor and devotion and welcomed him into his home.

Then Shri Gusainji asked about the manner of the festivals, and Damodardas explained everything to him.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): There are many doubts regarding this, such as: Shri Acharyaji possesses all powers—he is capable of doing, not doing, and doing otherwise—so why would Shri Thakurji ask for food?

The meaning of this is that Damodardas’s devotion characterized by love (premlakshana bhakti) had already become firm, and he was in the form of Lalitaji. Thus, he was extremely dear to Shri Thakurji. Lalitaji is in the middle (intermediary), being immersed in the service of both divine forms. Therefore, Damodardas experiences emotion in the presence of both Shri Acharyaji and Shri Thakurji.

Because of this, Shri Acharyaji said to Shri Thakurji: “As I constantly allow Damodardas to experience my form, so too you must constantly let him experience your form.” By saying this, it is shown how much intense love Shri Acharyaji had for Damodardas. It is understood that Shri Acharyaji thought, “May it never happen that after me Damala suffers in any way,” and thus he spoke to Shri Thakurji.

Moreover, the path (Pushtimarg) that was established in the heart of Damodardas was done so for the sake of Shri Gusainji. The meaning of this is that even though Shri Gusainji is God, he was still a child at that time. But Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu established his path of devotion firmly in the heart of Damodardas. Shri Acharyaji himself said from his holy mouth: “This path, Damala, has been revealed for you.”

Therefore, when it is established in the heart of a Vaishnav, it spreads among the Vaishnavs later on. The first religious principle (dharma) that remained in Shri Gusainji’s heart was because it had already been firmly established in Gokul. In Gokul, from the very beginning, all the remaining and unending greatness (mahatmya) had been carried.

It is said, “The bindu (point) is creation, and Vaishnavs are of the nada (sound) creation.” Therefore, devotion (bhakti) naturally arises in them. For this reason, Gopaldas has sung: “The souls on the path of devotion (bhaktimargiya jiv) are independent only through the devotees.”

Thus, the bhaktimargiya (devotional path) souls are independent, O Devi, but their devotion grows only through devotees. For this reason, Shri Acharyaji has said in the Navratna: “Offering (nivedanam) must always be remembered by such persons.”

In this way, when it is kept in the hearts of devotees, the path of devotion (bhaktimarg) manifests. Otherwise, it would merely be called the path of God (ishwargati). There, only the path of God would be spoken of, but in the devotional path (bhaktimarg), even the path of God is understood. Where there is devotion, there God Himself is present. Where there is no devotion, then by the rule of bhaktimarg, God is not manifest, though He remains as the indwelling witness (antaryami). Therefore, the greatness that comes in the devotees is what defines the bhaktimarg.

Prasang 3 - Is the Donor Greater or the Gift?

Once, at another time, Damodardas and Shri Gusainji were sitting

together in private. Then Shri Gusainji asked Damodardas, “How do you regard Shri Acharyaji?”

Damodardas replied, “Everyone in the world says that Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu is Jagdish (the Lord of the Universe). They say the greatest Jagdish is Shri Thakurji. But I regard Shri Acharyaji as even greater than that.”

Then Shri Gusainji asked Damodardas, “Why do you say this? Isn't Shri Thakurji the greater one?”

Damodardas replied to Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! Is the donor greater, or is the one who owns wealth greater? If someone has a lot of wealth, what of it? Only when they give it away are they truly known as great. And Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu’s entire wealth is Shri Nathji. Yet he gave himself—his all—even to a soul like me. Therefore, I regard Shri Acharyaji as the greatest of all.”

Prasang 4 - The Sevak Instructs the Master

Once again, at another time, Shri Gusainji was sitting in the assembly. Two or three Vaishnavs—Kumbhandas, Govinddas, and others—were sitting nearby, laughing and playing in private. Shri Gusainji himself was laughing, playing, joking, and in great joy conversing about playful topics.

At that moment, Damodardas arrived there. Shri Gusainji greeted him with great respect and honor. Afterward, Damodardas entered, performed prostrations, and then sat down. Then Shri Gusainji said to Damodardas, “Maharaj! I do not yet have certainty about my path. This path brings great suffering, restlessness, and pain.”

Damodardas replied, “You are blessed. You speak the truth. But when Shri Acharyaji’s grace comes upon us, only then will there be suffering and restlessness. This path cannot be attained without Shri Acharyaji’s favor.”

Hearing this, Damodardas prostrated again and said, “I must make one humble request to you, O Raja. But you are the master; you will know and act rightly. This path is of such a nature.”

Then Shri Gusainji became very pleased and said, “This discourse has been spoken to me by Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu through you. If you do not speak, who else will say it? Seeing you brings immense joy to my heart, so speak joyfully. I say this knowing you to be a true sevak

of Shri Acharyaji."

After this, Shri Gusainji accepted the teaching of Damodardas and became steadfast in it. Thus, Damodardas was regarded as the greatest of the great.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): According to worldly customs, it may seem improper for a sevak to instruct the master. But the doubt is answered by explaining that Damodardas was in the form of Lalitaji. Shri Gusainji (like Chandravali) had the mood of parakiya rasa (love outside of a formal bond). In parakiya rasa, there is intense love, and the heart remains attached to the beloved all twenty-four hours. Here, the nature of jarabhava (playful jealousy) is displayed: how can there be laughter and joking with others?

Moreover, Damodardas's physical form was merely an appearance. In reality, Shri Acharyaji's divine presence remained within him at all times, twenty-four hours a day. Whatever came from Damodardas's mouth was actually Shri Acharyaji speaking. That is why Shri Gusainji said, "This discourse has been spoken to me by Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu through you."

Prasang 5 - The Shraddha, Siddhant Rahasya, and the Guru's

Grace

One day, it was the shraddha (memorial ritual) day for Damodardas's father. On that day, Shri Gusainji came there. He performed the shraddha ceremony for Damodardas's father. Later, when the ritual of utthapana (concluding the ceremony) was being performed, Damodardas came for darshan. At that moment, Shri Gusainji said, "Give me the dakshina (ceremonial offering)."

Damodardas replied, "I will say one thing as the dakshina." He then delivered an explanation of one and a half shlokas from Siddhant Rahasya. This was something significant.

Shri Gusainji said, "Go ahead, say more." Damodardas replied, "This much only is my resolve." Then Shri Gusainji became silent.

Afterward, Damodardas explained the system of the path (Pushtimarg), narrated the commentary of Shrimad Bhagavatam called Shri Subodhiniji, the commentaries on Shri Acharyaji

Mahaprabhu's writings, and the secret discourses to Shri Gusainji.

After this, Shri Gusainji did not allow Damodardas to bow down to him. The reason was that Shri Gusainji thought in his mind, "Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu constantly resides in the heart of Damodardas. Why should I allow him to bow to me?" Therefore, he did not allow Damodardas to prostrate.

Instead, Shri Gusainji offered his own charanamrit (water sanctified by washing his feet) to Damodardas. Later, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu appeared to Damodardas and gave him a command: "You must take the charanamrit of Shri Gusainji daily."

The next morning, Damodardas went to Shri Gusainji and asked for charanamrit. Shri Gusainji initially refused. Then Damodardas said to Shri Gusainji, "I have received the command of Shri Acharyaji, and I have had his darshan. He said, 'Take the charanamrit.'" Then Shri Gusainji gave him the charanamrit.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The purpose of performing the shraddha was not to deliver Damodardas's ancestors, for they had already been delivered, as he was himself a great devotee. In the Maryada Marga (the path of rules), it is said by Lord Narasimha to Prahlad, "Twenty-one generations of a devotee's ancestors are delivered." Damodardas was of the Pushtimarg (the path of grace), so his ancestors were certainly already delivered.

However, without a relationship to the Pushtimarg, they could not be formally accepted into it. Therefore, through the shraddha performed by Shri Gusainji, that relationship was established, and the ancestors were accepted into the Pushtimarg.

This means: through Damodardas's shraddha, all his ancestors became related to Pushtimarg. But the role of the Guru is essential. Without the Guru, firm acceptance cannot take place. Thus, Shri Gusainji performed this act to establish their relationship.

There might be a doubt: Why did Damodardas perform shraddha for his ancestors when they were already related to Pushtimarg? And why not perform it for others? The answer is that Damodardas was a divine soul of Pushtimarg. When his ancestors became related to the Pushtimarg, it symbolized the acceptance of all ancestors of all Pushtimargiya souls. Just as the path was established for Damodardas's ancestors, it became established for all.

In this way, devotion planted at the root spreads to all. Similarly, the devotion of Damodardas caused devotion to grow in all souls. No individual soul has the power to independently create even a moment of Pushtimarg devotion.

As for the dakshina, Damodardas gave an explanation of one and a half shlokas from Siddhant Rahasya. When Shri Gusainji asked him to say more, Damodardas replied, "This much only is my resolve." The reason is that a true resolve is complete in itself; within it lies the entirety of the path.

Shri Gusainji did not allow Damodardas to take his charanamrit or to bow down to him. The reason is that Damodardas was in the form of Lalitaji, the dearest sakhi (female companion) of Shri Swaminiji. Only Lalitaji would do such acts for her. Therefore, Damodardas did not insist or take the charanamrit.

Later, Shri Acharyaji explained to Damodardas: "You must take Shri Gusainji's charanamrit and bow to him. I dwell in the heart of Shri Gusainji. My divine form has manifested through him."

Then Damodardas revealed this secret to Shri Gusainji. Hearing this, Shri Gusainji, now pleased, gave him the charanamrit and said, "Take it." He understood that Damodardas was receiving it through the sentiment of Shri Acharyaji, not through his own feelings.

Because of this principle, even though Shri Gopinathji (the elder son of Shri Acharyaji) was older than Shri Gusainji, no Vaishnav took charanamrit from him. This sentiment was revealed through Shri Gusainji, who, along with the seven sons of Shri Vallabhkul, established the tradition of giving charanamrit and accepting prostrations. This principle was thus made known.

Prasang 6 - Darshan Every Third Day, Bliss and Separation

And Shri Acharyaji gave darshan to Damodardas every third day. He would speak to him about the secret discourses of the path (Pushtimarg) and shower such grace upon him.

If, by chance, there was no darshan on the third day, then Damodardas would feel severe pain in his stomach and suffer greatly. But when darshan was granted afterward, the pain would immediately vanish.

In this way, for many years, Shri Acharyaji continued to give darshan and bestow such grace upon Damodardas. Whatever discussions took place, Damodardas would narrate all of them before Shri Gusainji, and day and night they would discuss the principles of the path. Shri Gusainji also showed great grace toward Damodardas and would say, “Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu always resides in the heart of Damodardas.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Acharyaji gave darshan to Damodardas every third day. The reason for this was that Damodardas would remain absorbed in the ecstasy of the previous darshan for three days. On the third day, when his body regained awareness, he would experience the pain of separation. Upon receiving darshan again, he would return to bliss in the divine form (svarupanand).

Prasang 7 - Know Shri Gusainji as You Know Me

Earlier, Damodardas used to sit by pressing on the edge of Shri Gusainji’s seat (gadi). One day Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu saw this. Then Shri Acharyaji asked Damodardas, “Damala! How do you regard Shri Gusainji?” Damodardas replied, “Maharaj, I regard him as your son.” Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said to Damodardas, “Just as you regard me, in the same way know his divine form (svarup).”

Prasang 8 - The Divine Command to Deliver the Souls

Once, Shri Gusainji was sitting. At that time, Damodardas said, “Maharaj! I do not yet have firmness in the path. The divine form (svarup) manifests itself.”

And once, when Shri Mahaprabhuji was lying down, Shri Govardhanji himself said, “Deliver the souls.” The one who performs the divine pastimes (lilakarta), the one who gives support (avalamban), the one who purifies (suddhikar), and the one who inspires feelings (uddipan bhav)—in this way, one and a half shlokas were spoken:

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श्रावणस्यामले पक्षे एकादश्यां महा न श। साक्षात ्भगवता प्रोक्तं तदक्षरश उच्यते ॥१॥

“In the pure fortnight of the month of Shravana, on the night of Ekadashi,

These words were directly spoken by Bhagavan Himself. Those very words are now

being spoken:” 1

ब्रह्मसंबंधकरणात्सवषां देहजीवयोः।

“By the act of establishing Brahmasambandh, all faults of body and soul are removed.”

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In this one and a half shlokas, everything is contained.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning is this: The month of Shravana belongs to the Lord. The pure and bright fortnight (Shukla Paksha) is for the devotees. That Ekadashi day belongs to the Lord. Ekadashyām—meaning, to purify the eleven senses of the devotees.

Mahānishi—meaning, midnight, when during the Rasa Leela the Lord Himself speaks without reservation to the devotees, revealing the secret discourses in the Leela. In the same way, He spoke to Shri Acharyaji. All the words were spoken directly. Therefore, this sentiment is focused on Shri Acharyaji.

Now Shri Govardhannathji says: “Establish Brahmasambandh for everyone—their bodies and souls.” Therefore (Damodardas said to Shri Gusainji), “There is a command to expand the path of devotion. You must carry it out. The souls are ignorant. Through Brahmasambandh, their faults will be removed and they will be accepted.”

In one shloka lies the essence of the divine Leela, and in the half shloka lies the method of the path. Everything is contained within these.

In this way, Damodardas spoke to Shri Gusainji. Thereafter, with the assistance of Damodardas, Shri Gusainji composed the book Shringar Ras Mandan.

Prasang 9 - Damodardas The Hidden Pillar of Pushtimarg

In the beginning, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said to Damodardas, “This path has been revealed for you. Wherever the establishment of Shri Acharyaji’s path exists, there too Damodardas’s place in the path remains hidden.”

And Damodardas said, “I heard the words of Shri Thakurji, but I did not understand them.” At that moment, Shri Acharyaji said, “Even now, there is an obstacle of ten births.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is this: as long as Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu’s path remains established, Damodardas continues to manifest again and again (with hidden attachment). He is the pillar of the path, because Shri Acharyaji established the divine pastimes of Bhagavan within the heart of Damodardas for the deliverance of the entire creation.

Damodardas’s birth signifies the establishment of the path for ten generations, just as Vallabhkul manifested for the same purpose. In this way, to strengthen devotion, Damodardas too manifested among many Vaishnavas repeatedly.

Prasang 10 - The Restless Devotee and the Lord’s Fondness

for Cows

Once, Shri Acharyaji was resting at the base of a tree near the ‘Sundar’ Shila (which is also called the ‘Pujani’ Shila, where there is a platform of Shri Acharyaji). He was lying down with his head resting in Damodardas’s lap.

At that time, Shri Govardhannathji came from the temple and approached Shri Acharyaji. Then Damodardas said softly to

Govardhannathji, “Do not come here right now. You are restless, and if you come, Shri Acharyaji will awaken.” So Shri Govardhannathji stood still at a distance.

Soon, Shri Acharyaji awoke and said, “Baba! Why are you standing there? Come closer.” Then Shri Govardhannathji came forward and said to Shri Acharyaji, “Your sevak forbade me, saying, ‘Do not come here. Shri Acharyaji will wake up.’ So I stayed standing at a distance.”

Then Shri Acharyaji became displeased with Damodardas and said, “Why did you stop Shri Govardhannathji?” Shri Govardhannathji then spoke, “Why are you angry with him? He has followed his dharma. This is exactly how he should be.”

Shri Acharyaji then seated Shri Govardhannathji in his lap, touched his cheek gently, and said, “Baba, give me some command.” Shri Govardhannathji said, “I am very fond of cows.”

Then Shri Acharyaji called Sadupande and instructed him to perform the Vedic rituals and prepare a sanctified offering. He said, “Arrange for the purchase of cows and present them to Shri Govardhannathji.”

Varta 2 - Krishnadas Meghna Kshatri

Now about the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu—Krishnadas Meghna Kshatri, who lived in Soron. The sentiment of his discourse is spoken of here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Krishnadas was manifested from Vishakha Sakhi. Vishakhaji is the shadow form of Shri Swaminiji. Just as a shadow moves with the body, in the same way, Vishakhaji always remains with Shri Swaminiji. Similarly, Krishnadas also stayed constantly with Shri Acharyaji. Krishnadas had a great influx of divine majesty (aishwarya). This will be described further in the discourse.

Prasang 1 - Three Boons and the Test of Gurubhava

Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu performed a circumambulation of the earth. On all three occasions, Krishnadas was with him. During the first circumambulation, at Badrinarayan, there are mountains named Parli and Kirni. From there, a large rock fell. Krishnadas Meghna held

it back with his hand.

At that moment, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu became very pleased and gave him a supernatural reward. But in order to test him, Shri Acharyaji asked Krishnadas, “Ask, what do you wish for?”

Then Krishnadas asked for three things: 1) The principles of the path (Pushtimarg) should be firmly established in my heart. 2) The defect of speaking too much (verbosity) should be removed. 3)Please visit my Guru’s house and accept him. Shri Acharyaji granted him two of these requests but did not fulfill the third—that of visiting the Guru’s house.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is this: Previously, there was a sense of Gurubhava (devotion towards his Guru) in Krishnadas’s heart, which outwardly manifested here. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji withheld the divine boon and granted only two of the requests.

He did not visit the Guru’s house because that sentiment was not divine (daivi). Without divine sentiment, acceptance within this path is not possible. Thus, two things were granted, but the Gurubhava remained. As a result, Krishnadas did not attain full realization of the path. However, the defect of verbosity was removed. His original strength (spiritual power) slightly diminished because of this lingering Gurubhava.

Prasang 2 - The Cave of Vyasji and the Half Shloka

Again, Shri Acharyaji proceeded from Shri Badrikashram and arrived at the cave of Vyasji. That place was inaccessible to ordinary souls. So Shri Acharyaji said to Krishnadas, “Stand here and wait.”

When Shri Acharyaji went ahead, Veda Vyasji himself came forward. He welcomed Shri Acharyaji and took him into his own abode. Afterward, Veda Vyasji said to Shri Acharyaji, “You have written a commentary on the Shrimad Bhagavatam. Please recite it to me.”

Then Shri Acharyaji recited one shloka from the chapter Yugal Geet (The Song of the Divine Couple). That shloka was

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"यामबाहुकृतबामकपोलो विल्गतभूरधरा पतवेणुम्।

Where Mukunda rests his left cheek upon his right arm, Places the

flute on the earth

with its end lifted slightly,

कोमलांगुली भरा श्रतमाग गोप्य ईरय त यत्र मुकुन्दः“ ॥१॥

And with his soft, tender fingers, beckons the Gopis To walk along the path where he

leads them.” □1□

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The explanation of this shloka was completed in three days. Then Veda Vyasji said, “I am not able to grasp the full essence of this explanation, so now please forgive me.”

Afterward, Shri Acharyaji said, “You composed the Vedanta Sutras in such a way that they have been interpreted to support Mayavada (the doctrine of illusion).” Then Vyasji replied, “What could I do? That was the command given to me—to compose them in such a way that both meanings could be derived.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “But we have interpreted them in the sense of Brahmavada (the doctrine of the Supreme Brahman), and that is the meaning we have presented.” Hearing this, Veda Vyasji became very pleased.

Afterward, Shri Acharyaji took leave of Veda Vyasji and returned on the third day. When he saw Krishnadas still standing in the same place, Shri Acharyaji was very pleased and said, “You are still standing here. You did not leave. Why is that?”

Krishnadas replied, “Maharaj! Where could I go? Without your lotus feet, I have no other refuge.” Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu became extremely pleased and said, “Ask—what do you desire?” Then again Krishnadas asked for the same three things. Of these, two were granted, but the request regarding visiting his Guru’s house was not fulfilled.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is that there was still some Gurubhava (devotion towards his previous Guru) remaining in Krishnadas’s heart. Because of this, even from the beginning, his spiritual strength had somewhat diminished. This is why Shri Acharyaji did not take Krishnadas along with him into Vyasji’s cave.

This is also why the episode of the Yugal Geet was narrated at that time. But the deep realization (dharana) of it could not yet manifest in Krishnadas. Even Veda Vyasji himself could not grasp it fully. This is because Veda Vyasji is a partial incarnation (kala avatar). How could he fully grasp the bhava-filled speech of Purushottam?

Shrimad Bhagavatam was spoken directly by Shri Purushottam Himself while seated in Vyasji’s heart. Vyasji was merely the medium through whom it was transmitted. He did not experience the rasa (divine nectar) of the Bhagavatam fully. This secret has been expressed by Harjivandas in this verse:

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(Raag Kedaro | राग केदारो)

जोलों ह र आपुनपों न जनावें । तोलों वेद पुरान स्मृ त सब पढे सुनें न हं आवें ॥१॥

“If Hari does not reveal Himself personally, then reading or listening to all the Vedas,

Puranas, and Smritis brings no realization.” □1□

सु न वरं च नारायण मुख सो नारद सो क हदीनो । नारद क ह वेदव्यास सो आप सोध न ह कीनो ॥ २॥

“Hearing this directly from the mouths of Brahma and Narayan, Narad

spoke it, and Veda

Vyas heard it, yet even he did not realize it fully.” 2

वेदव्यास औषध की नाई प ढ़ तन ताप नसायो । तनतें पढे मु न सुकदेवा प र क्षत को जु सुनायो ॥३॥

“Veda Vyas, like taking medicine, read the scriptures to remove the fever of his body.

Later, Sage Shukadeva read them and narrated them to King Parikshit.” 3

जद प नृप त सु न ब्रज की लीला दसम कही सुकदेवा। तोऊ सवात्मभाव न उपज्यो तातें करी न सेवा ॥४॥

“Although the king heard the divine pastimes of Braj described in the Tenth Canto by

Shukadeva, even then, a feeling of oneness with the soul (sarvatmabhava) did not arise,

and therefore he could not engage in service (seva).” 4

श्रीभागवत अमृत द ध म थके श्रीवलभ सव त्तम। क र आवरन दू र नजजन के हाथ दये पुरुषोत्तम ॥५॥।

“Shri Vallabh, the supreme among all, churned the nectar of the Shrimad Bhagavatam

like churning yogurt, removed the covering and handed it into the hands of his own

divine devotees—Purushottam himself.” 5

सेवा अरु श्रृंगार व वध रस श्रीवत्नभ प्रगटायो। क र कृपा नज दैवी जीवन पर ह रजीवन स्वाद चखायो ॥६॥

“He revealed various forms of service (seva) and adornments (shringar) filled with divine

rasa, And by his grace, he let his own divine souls taste the sweetness of Hari’s nectar.”

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In this way, it is through the grace of Shri Acharyaji that the experience of rasa was obtained.

Prasang 3 - Midnight Murmura and the Lesson of Asking

Once again, at another time, Shri Acharyaji went to Gangasagar. There, Shri Acharyaji was resting, and Krishnadas was pressing his feet. At that time, Shri Acharyaji thought in his mind, “If only there were some puffed rice (murmura), I would enjoy eating it.” Krishnadas Meghna understood this thought of Shri Acharyaji’s mind. Soon after, Shri Acharyaji fell asleep. Krishnadas quietly got up and went to Gangasagar.

There he saw, across the river, a lamp burning. Using that as a marker, he crossed the Ganga and reached the other side. There was a village there. In the fields, he had wet paddy cut. He paid the laborers and got puffed rice (murmura) prepared.

Afterward, Krishnadas crossed the Ganga again and came back to Shri Acharyaji. He placed the puffed rice before Shri Acharyaji and, pressing his lotus feet, woke him up. Then he said, “Maharaj, please partake.” Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu asked, “Where did you bring this from?” Krishnadas narrated the entire sequence of events. Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji was very pleased and said, “Ask—what do you desire?”

Once again, Krishnadas asked for the same three things: 1) That the principles of the path (Pushtimarg) be firmly established in his heart. 2) That the defect of verbosity (speaking unnecessarily) be removed. 3) That Shri Acharyaji visits his Guru’s house and accepts him. This time too, Shri Acharyaji granted the first two but did not fulfill the third request regarding visiting the Guru’s house.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Acharyaji had arrived at the banks of Gangasagar and was resting there at night. At midnight, he thought of puffed rice, which was only to test Krishnadas and shower grace upon him. For Purushottam, there is never any actual need for anything. If ever such a desire arises, it is only to bestow grace upon someone. This thought was known to Krishnadas.

Krishnadas then crossed the river and brought back the puffed rice. This was the work of God—it could never have been done by an ordinary soul. When Krishnadas pressed Shri Acharyaji’s feet and woke him up, Shri Acharyaji ate the puffed rice and was extremely

pleased. He then said, “Ask.” Krishnadas once again asked for the same three things.

Shri Acharyaji replied, “What does a soul know how to ask? Asking itself is a hindrance.” In this context, Paramānanddās has sung: "Mange sarvasva jāt hai, Paramānand bhākhe" (“By asking, one loses everything,” says Paramānand.”)

Because of Krishnadas’s lingering attachment to his Guru in his heart, there was no firm faith in Shri Mahaprabhu’s words. For whatever is granted once by Mahaprabhu is unchanging and firm. Why, then, should one ask again? This also revealed the rarity and preciousness of this path.

Although Krishnadas understood Shri Acharyaji’s desire for puffed rice through his grace, for the principles of the path to be firmly established in his heart, grace was still needed. The defect of verbosity (mukharata dosh) is inherent in the soul’s nature. It cannot be removed by the soul’s own effort. Only when Shri Acharyaji himself removes it does it go away. Therefore, if one regards any other person as God or Guru apart from Shri Acharyaji, then the fruits of this path can never be fully realized. This sentiment is revealed here.

Later, when Krishnadas went to his Guru’s place, he suffered greatly. He let go of all other supports (anyashraya) and came back to Shri Mahaprabhu. Then the principles of the path became firmly established in his heart, and the defect of verbosity was also removed. After that, he no longer asked Shri Acharyaji for anything. Taking refuge in anyone other than Shri Acharyaji is itself a hindrance.

Prasang 4 - Speaking the Secrets and Divine Smiles

Later, when the principles of the path became firmly established in his heart, Krishnadas once spoke confidential discourses (gopya varta) openly in front of everyone.

Then a certain Vaishnav went to Shri Acharyaji and said: Maharaj! Krishnadas is speaking secret discourses in front of everyone. Shri Acharyaji then asked Krishnadas: Why are you speaking confidential discourses in front of everyone? Krishnadas replied: Maharaj! Please ask them—what exactly have I said? So Shri Acharyaji turned to those Vaishnavs and asked: Did Krishnadas tell you any confidential discourses? The Vaishnavs answered: Maharaj! We do not remember anything at all. Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji smiled and said nothing

further.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The principles of the path had entered Krishnadas's heart. He became so filled with rasa (divine nectar) that it could not be contained. Therefore, he spoke confidential discourses to the Vaishnavs.

This reveals that Krishnadas was speaking out of his own personal experience. However, without proper receptivity (patratva) in the listeners, the rasa (divine essence) cannot be retained. (This is why the Vaishnavs later said they remembered nothing.)

Also, Krishnadas's state was somewhat similar to Damodardas's. He could not restrain himself from speaking. Both these sentiments are shown here.

Prasang 5 - Shri Thakurji's Beloved and Unbeloved Things

Once, Krishnadas asked Shri Acharyaji a question: Maharaj! What is Shri Thakurji's most beloved thing? Shri Acharyaji replied: Shri Thakurji is the enjoyer of the highest and most excellent things. But above all, milk and its products (goras) are extremely dear to him. The word "goras" in speech expresses an indescribable sentiment. And among all, the loving influence (snehmay prabhav) of a devotee is most beloved to him. That is why Shri Thakurji is called Bhaktavatsal (affectionate to his devotees). Then Krishnadas asked again: Maharaj! What is most disliked by Shri Thakurji? Shri Acharyaji replied: There is nothing more unpleasant to Shri Thakurji than smoke (dhua). But even more unpleasant to him is a devotee who is hateful toward other devotees.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): "Goras" here refers to the mutual love among Vaishnavs. And "smoke" represents the distress (klesh) caused among Vaishnavs. Wherever there is love, know that Shri Thakurji is present there. Wherever there is distress, know that Shri Thakurji keeps his distance.

Prasang 6 - The Mystery of Not Knowing the Divine Leela

Again, at another time, Krishnadas asked Shri Acharyaji: Maharaj! Why is it that, even after becoming a devotee, one does not understand the secrets of Shri Thakurji's divine pastimes?

Shri Acharyaji replied: It is because such a person has not performed proper surrender (samarpan) as prescribed. The method (vidhi) of surrender requires knowledge of what is being surrendered. One must surrender their sense of “I-ness” (ahanta), “mine-ness” (mamata), and ego (ahankar), realizing: “Now I am a sevak. I am under the control of my Master. Whatever the Lord does is supreme.” Without this internal state, the secret cannot be known.

Furthermore, if a person considers themselves qualified and does not associate with true devotees of God, then even if they perform actions, it is not done from the depths of the heart. Therefore, they fail to realize the true nature of Shri Thakurji’s form and pastimes.

One must associate with excellent devotees, study scriptures like the Bhagavatam, Shri Subodhiniji, and other texts day and night. Then divine feelings (bhav) will arise.

Shri Thakurji always dwells among Braj devotees. There, through service, he becomes bound. For this reason, Pushtimargiya Vaishnavs hold Shri Thakurji within their hearts. One must associate with such devotees. Examples are given of Gajendra, Dhruva, and other Vaishnavs. Each of them, through heartfelt service, had all their desires fulfilled. One must reflect upon the moods of the Braj devotees in the divine pastimes.

The Vaishnav who understands Shri Thakurji’s true form perceives him with divine vision. Such a person knows everything by divine insight. When a Vaishnav understands Shri Thakurji, then whatever work they do is done for Shri Thakurji. They feel the pain of separation from him, consider their own faults, and reflect deeply: "Who am I? Who was I before? After receiving a relationship with God (Brahmasambandh), who have I become? What is my duty now?"

When one constantly reflects day and night in this way, they will realize their own true form (svarup). This realization manifests for the sake of the Braj devotees. Therefore, when one associates with excellent devotees, they come to know Shri Thakurji.

Even though there are many scriptures, Puranas, and histories, the true nature of Shri Thakurji, who appeared in Braj, cannot be known from them alone. Shri Thakurji can only be truly known when one associates with God’s devotees. The proper way to serve is understood only through Pushtimargiya Vaishnavs. One must meet them, inquire about the sentiments, and serve accordingly. Then divine feelings (bhav) will arise, and one will come to know all the secrets of Shri

Thakurji's divine pastimes.

Prasang 7 - Badrinathji's Temple, the Missing Half Shloka,

and Divine Cooking

Once, Shri Acharyaji arrived at the temple of Shri Badrinathji. At that time, Vedavyasji was with him. Then Shri Acharyaji asked Vedavyasji: In the chapter of the Bhramar Geet, Uddhav was sent to the Braj devotees. In that context, half a shloka is missing. What is it?

Vedavyasji then recited the half shloka:

"Ātmatvabhaktavashyatvātsatyavāktvātsvabhāvataḥ" (By nature, because of his identity, being under the control of his devotees, speaking the truth—)

This commentary on the shloka had already been written earlier by Shri Acharyaji. Hearing this, Vedavyasji said: You are blessed. Afterward, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu entered the temple of Shri Badrinathji. That day was Vaman Dwadashi. On that day Shri Acharyaji was observing a fast (vrat). Both Vedavyasji and Krishnadas went in search of fruits and food suitable for fasting. However, they could not find anything.

Then Shri Badrinathji spoke to Shri Acharyaji: I have searched everywhere for suitable fruits and food, but nothing could be found. Therefore, you should prepare a meal yourself, offer it to Shri Thakurji as bhog, and then take your own meal.

Shri Acharyaji reflected: This seems to be Shri Thakurji's wish. Just then, Krishnadas came and said: Maharaj! No suitable fruits or food can be found here.

Through Vedavyasji, Shri Thakurji then conveyed: Prepare food and perform your meal. "Utsavānte cha pārṇā" (At the end of the festival, take your meal)—this is also my instruction.

After this, Shri Acharyaji himself cooked, offered the bhog to Shri Thakurji, and then took his own meal. From that day onward, Shri Acharyaji stopped observing the Vaman Dwadashi fast. Later, Shri Acharyaji took leave from Shri Badrinathji and returned with Krishnadas.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): No fruits or food were found. The purpose of this was to show that whatever Shri Acharyaji desires, everything becomes available accordingly. Vedavyasji and Krishnadas searched everywhere but did not find anything. This was so that Shri Acharyaji himself would prepare the festive offering in his own mind.

Outwardly, in order to maintain decorum, they spoke of searching for fruit. But no fruits were found. Therefore, through Vedavyasji, Shri Thakurji instructed him directly.

For this reason, Shri Gusainji later maintained the practice of fasting in the households of the seven sons (saat lalji), especially in the house of the eldest son, Shri Giridharji. And at other times, following “Utsavānte cha pārṇā,” Shri Thakurji would consume all food prepared.

Prasang 8 - The Final Departure of Krishnadas

Later, when Shri Acharyaji performed the Asurvyamoh Leela (his divine disappearance), Krishnadas too, overwhelmed by separation (viprayog), left his body.

Varta 3 - Damodardas Sambhalware

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Damodardas, a Kshatriya from Sambhal. He was a resident of Kannauj. The sentiment of his story is spoken of here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): From childhood, Damodardas had a deep yearning – "How will I attain Shri Thakurji?"

At one time, Damodardas had come to Prayag for the Makar Sankranti bath. There, he met Krishnadas. While conversing, Krishnadas (Meghna) said, "Shri Vallabhacharya has appeared in this world. He is now in the South. Near King Krishnadev, he has refuted Mayavad (illusionist philosophy). Through his grace, one will certainly attain Shri Thakurji. I have affection for my Guru, but no significant work was done through him for me. Therefore, now I will go wherever Shri Acharyaji is." Saying this to Damodardas, Krishnadas went to the southern regions.

From that time, after Krishnadas Meghna left for Shri Acharyaji, Damodardas's longing intensified greatly. "How will I meet Shri Acharyaji?" In this separation, Damodardas observed Makar Sankranti baths for a whole month. On the full moon day (Maha Sud 15), while bathing, a copper leaf (tamrapatra) floated to Damodardas from the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna. He brought it home. That night, he dreamt a voice saying, "Read this letter and take refuge."

In the morning, he sought out great scholars, Brahmins, and holy men who had come to Prayag for the Makar bath and asked them to read it. But no one could decipher it.

At that time, Damodardas was handling financial matters in Kashi for Seth Purushottamdas. He went there, took a bill of exchange (hoondi), and explained the entire situation, saying, "This letter is to be read by Shri Acharyaji himself. No one else has the capacity. Krishnadas Meghna told me, 'By taking refuge in Shri Acharyaji, one attains Shri Thakurji.'"

Hearing this, Seth Purushottamdas felt restless, thinking, "When will I get darshan of Shri Acharyaji?" (The story of Seth Purushottam will be described separately.)

Thus, Damodardas stayed 15 days in Kashi, but no one could read the letter. Finally, he returned to his home in Kannauj. He continued in longing for a few months until Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu himself came to Kannauj. He stayed in a garden outside the village.

Prasang 1 - The Divine Meeting and the Letter of Refuge

When Shri Acharyaji arrived in Kannauj, he stayed in a garden outside the village and sent Krishnadas into the village, saying, “Bring the necessary items, but do not tell anyone that Shri Acharyaji has arrived.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this instruction was that Krishnadas might meet Damodardas, and Damodardas should hear directly from him about Shri Acharyaji’s arrival, which would naturally draw him due to his devotional nature. If Damodardas came of his own accord, it would be through genuine affection, avoiding any interference or compulsion.

Also, another reason was that before Shri Acharyaji came to Kannauj, he had already received a divine command that the souls of Kannauj were to be purified. Therefore, he thought, “If the command has been given, then the meeting will happen naturally without my active intervention.”

Krishnadas went into the village, collected all necessary items, and returned. At the royal gate, Damodardas saw him and recognized him. Getting down from his horse, Damodardas approached Krishnadas, offered prostrations, and asked, “Has Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu arrived?”

Krishnadas, recalling Shri Acharyaji’s instruction, remained silent. Damodardas thought to himself, “Why else would Krishnadas be here?”

As Krishnadas left, Damodardas quietly followed him, sending his horse back home. Shri Acharyaji, from a distance, saw Damodardas approaching and asked Krishnadas, “Why did you tell him?” Krishnadas replied, “Maharaj, I said nothing.”

Damodardas then pleaded with Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj, he did not tell me anything. I simply followed him.”

Shri Acharyaji asked Damodardas, “Did you bring the letter you

received?" Damodardas replied humbly, "Maharaj, what is the use of the letter now?" Shri Acharyaji said, "You were commanded to bring it. Bring the letter." The letter was then sent for.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): When Shri Acharyaji questioned Krishnadas, it was not out of anger but as part of a divine play. Damodardas, by saying the letter was no longer needed, subtly expressed his realization that Shri Acharyaji was none other than God himself. Shri Acharyaji smiled and said, "Bring it anyway, since it was the divine command."

The letter was read aloud, and its meaning was revealed to Damodardas. His name was mentioned within. Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji came to Damodardas's home. Damodardas's wife also came for refuge, and Shri Acharyaji initiated both of them into surrender. Even a maidservant, a divine soul, took refuge.

Damodardas then asked, "Maharaj, what is your command? What should we do now?" Shri Acharyaji said, "Now you should serve." Damodardas asked, "Maharaj, how should I serve?" Shri Acharyaji instructed, "Find a proper image of Shri Thakurji for seva (worship)."

A deity image was procured from a tailor's house, and Damodardas brought it home. The entire household was purified, and Shri Acharyaji personally performed the Panchamrit abhishek (ritual bathing) of the deity, naming him Shri Dwarkanathji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The name Shri Dwarkanathji was given because the responsibility of expanding royal-level service (raj-niti seva) was first entrusted to Damodardas.

A throne was installed, and Shri Acharyaji himself began cooking and offering bhog (food) to Shri Thakurji at the appropriate times. After offering, betel leaves (beeda) were presented. Seeing green betel leaves, Shri Acharyaji became displeased and instructed, "Do not offer unripe leaves to Shri Thakurji. Always present the finest and most excellent items. Shri Thakurji only accepts the best." From then on, the household began serving meticulously, and Shri Dwarkanathji's seva flourished beautifully.

Shri Acharyaji further instructed, "Do not offer to Shri Thakurji any fabric from a parkaala (bolt of cloth) that has already been cut. Always reserve the first portion for Shri Thakurji before using it elsewhere."

Damodardas began serving with great care. Golden bowls were used

to hold nectar-like food items, so subtle and refined that others could not even perceive there was anything inside them.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Later, the protocol for offering garments and other items was established. Any surplus not used for Shri Thakurji was called prasadi (sanctified). Thus, it became the practice in Pushtimarg that the best of all materials should first be dedicated to Shri Thakurji. Golden vessels symbolized service in the mood of Shri Swaminiji (Rukmini), while silver ones reflected the mood of Shri Chandravali.

Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji departed on his circumambulation of the earth. During that time, Damodardas would personally fetch water for Shri Thakurji. One day, his father-in-law came to his house and said, “You fetch water yourself? It brings shame to our caste. Have a maid do it instead.”

Damodardas reflected on Surdasji’s words in his kirtan: “In Kaliyug, only devotion matters; cast aside all shame.” And another verse: “Do not care for the opinion of others; hold firm to single-minded devotion.”

He then told his wife, “Come with me, you too fetch water.” The next day, he carried one pot, and his wife carried another. When his father-in-law saw them passing under the marketplace, he felt remorse and came to Damodardas, fell at his feet, and said, “I was wrong to tell you that. From now on, you alone fetch water. Do not make the women do it. I will never interfere again.”

Shri Thakurji began showing affection towards Damodardas, often asking him directly for what he desired. Seeing Damodardas’s devotion, Shri Acharyaji was greatly pleased and said, “One who has not seen King Ambarish should see Damodardas. Ambarish served in the path of propriety (Maryada Marg), but Damodardas served in the Pushti Marg. The latter far surpasses the former.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Damodardas’s service of fetching water was performed in the loving mood of Shri Yamunaji. Just as Ambarish served within the bounds of propriety, Damodardas served in the grace-filled path of Pushti. Thus, the comparison is like that between the moon and the sun – the latter being vastly greater in brilliance.

Even when his father-in-law told him not to involve his wife in fetching water, Damodardas thought, “If I stop her now, people might

blame my father-in-law. But if I insist too much, Shri Thakurji might not accept such forced service. Let me discourage her gently, so that if love is genuine, she will stop on her own." He then said to his wife, "From now on, I will fetch water myself; you do not need to." His wife agreed, and thus the father-in-law was not blamed. Damodardas continued serving with even greater determination.

Prasang 2 - The Temple Doors, the Maidservant, and True

Devotion

Once, during the summer days, Damodardas placed Shri Thakurji to rest in the temple and then went to the upper room (choubara) to sleep. At that time, Shri Dwarkanathji instructed the maidservant, "Open the door. It is very hot for me." The maid opened the temple doors. Then Shri Dwarkanathji said to the maid, "Fan me." The maid began fanning. Afterwards, Shri Thakurji told her, "Go, leave it. Let it be." So the maid left the temple doors open and went to sleep.

In the morning, Damodardas saw the temple doors were open. He asked, "Who opened the doors?" The maid replied to Damodardas, "Shri Thakurji commanded me, 'You open the doors.' So I opened them."

Damodardas said, "Why didn't he tell me to open them? Why did he tell you?" Then Damodardas thought in his heart, "Why did Shri Thakurji not instruct me to open the doors? Why did he tell the maid instead? But the Lord is very merciful. He converses with whomever he has affection for. In Shri Acharyaji's acceptance, all are equal. Worldly people may say there is high and low, but Shri Thakurji is bound by love."

Then Shri Thakurji said to Damodardas, "I made them open, and she opened them. Why are you upset about this? You went to sleep in the upper room and left me inside the temple."

Damodardas replied, "I will accept prasad only after the temple is newly renovated." His wife said, "Why act like this? This is not a matter of just five or seven days." Damodardas replied, "I will not take the hard-earned Mahaprasad. I will survive on fruits."

Thus, work on the temple began immediately. When the auspicious day arrived, Shri Dwarkanathji was seated in the temple. A great

festival was held. Afterwards, Mahaprasad was distributed to all Vaishnavas. Then Damodardas himself partook of Mahaprasad.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Thakurji had the maid fan him but did not reveal this to the wife. She had already stopped fetching water, so Shri Thakurji did not ask her. Why? Because she had not previously done water service, there was no concern. If she had begun and then stopped, it would have mattered. Since she had ceased due to her father-in-law's words, Shri Thakurji assigned the service of opening the door and fanning to the maid.

It is Shri Acharyaji's teaching that until perfect affection is firmly established in the heart, one should serve according to their capacity, considering the limitations of the body like heat and cold. Damodardas went to sleep upstairs, leaving Shri Thakurji no means to air himself. Therefore, to establish proper temple etiquette, Shri Thakurji had the maid open the doors. The maid was qualified for manasi seva (mental service), performing it secretly all day and night. No one knew of this. Shri Thakurji was very pleased with the maid.

When Damodardas became upset with her, Shri Thakurji could not tolerate it. He thought, "Why are you angry with the one dear to me?" Shri Thakurji took the maid's side and told Damodardas, "I had her open the doors. Why are you angry? From now on, love her. Recognize her form as extraordinary. You went and slept upstairs, leaving me no way to air out the room. Have you forgotten your role as Chitra Sakhi in your previous life? Renovate the temple properly."

Then Damodardas was deeply moved, realizing the divine nature of his own and the maid's forms. In this inspired state, he said, "Once the temple is completed, only then will I eat." The wife said, "How will we manage without eating? This isn't work of just a day or two." But Damodardas, still under spiritual fervor, said, "I will only take fruit."

Thus, work on the temple proceeded swiftly. Windows, niches, sanctum (nij mandir), verandas, courtyard, doors, and curtains were arranged in the mood of divine pastimes. After determining an auspicious time, Shri Thakurji was ceremoniously installed. A grand festival was held, and the Vaishnavas offered donations to Shri Acharyaji.

Prasang 3 - Shri Thakurji's Rebuke for Careless Words

Again, one day, after offering Rajbhog to Shri Thakurji, Damodardas went into the bedroom temple to arrange the bed. There he saw that a cat had soiled the bedding. Damodardas said, “Shri Thakurji cannot even protect his own bed?”

Hearing this, Shri Thakurji angrily kicked the Rajbhog plate off the throne and said to Damodardas, “Are you the sevak, or am I? How can you, as a sevak, speak like this?”

Shri Thakurji was very displeased. Damodardas humbly begged for forgiveness and pleaded earnestly. He prepared all the offerings again and presented them to Shri Thakurji, but for two whole months, Shri Thakurji did not speak a word to him.

Eventually, after much pleading, Shri Thakurji began speaking again.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Thakurji kicked away the Rajbhog plate to demonstrate that Damodardas had now been given the right to serve in the mood of a das (servant). Such a scolding would only occur if he had previously been granted the right to serve in the mood of a sakha (friend). Since Damodardas had acted beyond his current qualification without Shri Acharyaji’s permission, Shri Thakurji did not accept the offering and gave him this instruction.

This shows how acting beyond one’s level of spiritual maturity without proper authority creates obstacles, even for a Vaishnav.

Prasang 4 - Serving Guests with Love and Revealing Inner

Dependence

Once, at a certain time, Damodardas Harasani came as a guest to Damodardas Sambhalware’s house. He stayed at the house in Sambhal for five to seven days. During that time, Sambhalware served him very well and with great care.

Later, Damodardas Harasani left from there and came to Adail. Then Shri Acharyaji asked Damodardas Harasani, “Damala! Where did you stay? Where did you take Mahaprasad?”

Damodardas Harasani humbly said to Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! In Kannauj, I stayed at Damodardas Sambhalware’s house. I took unsacred Mahaprasad (anashkhadi).”

Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji became displeased with Damodardas Sambhalware and thought, “He is my close sevak. Why did he not have sacred Mahaprasad (sakharadi) served to him?”

At that very moment, sitting in his house, Damodardas Sambhalware understood in his heart Shri Acharyaji’s displeasure towards him. He said to his wife, “You serve Shri Thakurji properly. I am going to Adail to have Shri Acharyaji’s darshan.”

Then Damodardas Sambhalware went to Adail. There, he arrived and did darshan of Shri Acharyaji, offering full prostrations. Shri Acharyaji sat turning his back towards him.

Damodardas Sambhalware humbly pleaded, saying, “Maharaj! What is my offense? A living being is prone to commit offenses, but to recognize the offense is a good thing.”

Shri Acharyaji then said, “Why did you not serve Damodardas Harasani sacred Mahaprasad? Why did you serve unsacred Mahaprasad?” Damodardas Sambhalware humbly pleaded, “Maharaj, please ask Damodardas Harasani himself.” Then Shri Acharyaji asked Damodardas Harasani, “Damala! Why did you not take the sacred Mahaprasad at Damodardas Sambhalware’s house?”

Damodardas Harasani replied, “Maharaj! Shri Thakurji accepts the Bal Bhog (morning offering) at dawn. I did not have a taste for sakharadi Mahaprasad after that, so I did not take it.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “You did not take it according to your own wish. But I had great displeasure towards him (Sambhalware).”

This play of the Lord is to reveal the devotion in the hearts of his devotees. Why? Because while sitting in Kannauj at his home, Damodardas Sambhalware understood the feelings in Shri Acharyaji’s heart. Shri Acharyaji is always present in the hearts of devotees. Would such a devotee not know the feelings in his heart? But to test the devotee, this was a divine play of the Lord.

Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji honored Damodardas Sambhalware greatly and sent him back to his home. Upon returning to Kannauj, Damodardas and his wife began serving Shri Thakurji with even greater devotion.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Acharyaji’s reason for sending Damodardas Harasani as a guest to Sambhalware’s house was to show his grace upon Sambhalware. Damodardas Sambhalware,

along with his wife and wealth, served in royal style (raj seva). Whenever Vaishnavas visited and then went for Shri Acharyaji's darshan, Sambhalware would send gifts with them as tokens of affection and respect. He served Vaishnavas with such excellence that they praised him highly before Shri Acharyaji. Whoever came spoke highly of his hospitality.

Then Shri Acharyaji thought in his heart, "If the feelings within the heart are pure, only then does the service bear fruit. Otherwise, if there is dependence on others (parashray), the work does not succeed."

Understanding Shri Acharyaji's heart, Damodardas Harasani came to Sambhalware's house as a guest (as an act of grace). During his stay, Sambhalware observed all the qualities of his own heart carefully. However, his wife retained even a trace of dependency on her father. Because of this, sacred Mahaprasad was not served to the guests.

They stayed five to seven days, but Sambhalware did not speak to Damodardas Harasani about this inner issue of the heart or any worldly matters.

Later, when Sambhalware came before Shri Acharyaji, Shri Acharyaji asked, "Where have you come from?" Sambhalware humbly replied, "I had gone as a guest to Damodardas Sambhalware's house. I did not take the sacred Mahaprasad but took unsacred Mahaprasad."

By saying this, Damodardas Harasani demonstrated his steadfastness of feeling (bhav). That is why he took unsacred Mahaprasad. His wife's feelings were not yet firmly rooted, which is why sacred Mahaprasad was not served.

Because of this, Shri Acharyaji became displeased with Damodardas Sambhalware and thought, "My close sevak was in his house, yet his wife did not let go of her dependency on others. When will such an opportunity come again?"

This thought in Shri Acharyaji's heart was known by Sambhalware, but his wife could not understand, for she remained attached to external support.

Prasang 5 - Hospitality to Vaishnavas and Offering Gifts to

Shri Acharyaji

The Vaishnavas from Singhnand, when they would go for Shri Acharyaji's darshan, stayed at Damodardas's house in Kannauj. Damodardas served Mahaprasad to all of them. Later, when these Vaishnavas departed for Adail, he sent with each of them a gold mohar (coin), a coconut, and an offering for Shri Acharyaji.

Why? He said, "How can you do prostrations to my Guru empty-handed?" Such was Damodardas's devotion to the Lord.

Prasang 6 - The Wife's Devotion and Selfless Service Despite

Luxury

Damodardas's father-in-law was very wealthy. At the time of marriage, he had given his daughter one hundred maidservants as dowry, saying, "My daughter will sit comfortably while all the work is done by the maidservants."

However, Damodardas's wife did not employ the maidservants for any service. All tasks related to Shri Thakurji's seva she performed herself, while the maidservants handled all other household work. Thus, she too was deeply devoted to the Lord.

Prasang 7 - The Desire for a Son and the Consequence of

Dependence

Once, Shri Acharyaji was resting at Damodardas Sambhalware's house. Damodardas Sambhalware was massaging his feet. Shri Acharyaji asked him, "Do you have any desire or wish in your heart?"

Damodardas replied, "Maharaj! By your grace, I have no desire left." Shri Acharyaji then said, "Go and ask your wife if she has any wish." Damodardas went to his wife and asked, "Do you have any wish in your heart?" His wife replied, "I have no other wish except for the desire for a son."

Damodardas returned and said to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! My wife desires a son." Shri Acharyaji, from his divine mouth, gave the command, "You will have a son."

Later, Shri Acharyaji went to Shrinathji's temple at Jatipura. In time, Damodardas's wife conceived. One day, while she was in the courtyard, a wandering fortune-teller came by. Some women in the house began asking him questions. One maid went and asked him, "What will happen? Will it be a son or a daughter?" The fortune-teller replied, "It will be a son."

Some days later, Shri Acharyaji came to Kannauj. When Damodardas approached to touch his feet, Shri Acharyaji said, "Do not touch me. You have become dependent on another (anya-ashray)."

Damodardas said, "Maharaj! I know nothing of this." Shri Acharyaji said, "Ask your wife." Damodardas went and asked his wife. She then narrated everything that had happened with the fortune-teller. Damodardas reported it all to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji said, "A son will indeed be born, but he will be a mlechchha (impure)."

After this, Shri Acharyaji returned to Adail. Hearing all this, Damodardas's wife stopped touching any items or utensils used for Shri Thakurji's seva, saying, "There is a mlechchha in my womb. How can I touch Shri Thakurji's items?"

When the time for childbirth came, she told her mother, "As soon as the child is born, take him away immediately. I will not see his face. If I even see his face, it will bring ruin upon me. Do something so that

his face is not shown to me."

Her mother did exactly that. As soon as the child was born, she took him to her own house and handed him to a wet nurse.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): When Shri Acharyaji came to Kannauj, he told Damodardas, "If there is any wish, ask for it." In this way, he was testing Damodardas again. Why? Because his wife still had dependency on others (anya-ashray). By her association, some trace of it might enter Damodardas as well. Shri Acharyaji thought, "If I give them a son, they will remain deprived of the fruits of Pushtimarg (path of grace)." But Damodardas was steadfast and replied, "Maharaj! Since I have received service to your lotus feet, I have no other desire." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Go and ask your wife." Here it should be understood that Shri Acharyaji spoke only to Damodardas, not directly to his wife. Nor did his wife come to Shri Acharyaji to make any request herself. This shows she was not very close to Shri Mahaprabhuji and carried dependency in her mind.

Her desire for a son was not with the intention of serving Pushtimarg. She did not think that a son, if born, would necessarily serve. Shri Acharyaji understood this and thought, "My shelter has been forsaken. The son will be born, but devotion has now become tinged with selfish desire."

As Mukunddas says in the Seventh Skandh of the Bhagavatam, quoting Prahlad to Lord Nrisimhaji: "When one seeks one's own benefit from the Lord, such devotion is blameworthy and not true devotion." Thus, seeking worldly or Vedic fulfillment from the Lord is censured. Such a person does not attain true devotion.

Shri Acharyaji granted them a son and went to Giriraj at Govardhan. When the wife later became aware of her dependency, Shri Acharyaji came to Kannauj again. At that time, he did not allow Damodardas to touch his feet, saying, "Since you have accepted food from your wife's hands, you have no right to touch my feet."

This was to show that anya-ashray (dependency on anyone other than the Lord) is the greatest fault. Just as if a woman leaves her husband and takes another, her dharma (religious duty) is lost entirely, in the same way, even the slightest anya-ashray destroys a Vaishnav's dharma.

This principle was revealed here. Later, the wife developed single-mindedness (ananyata) and would not touch Shri Thakurji's items

during her impurity. Through her son, she let go of all attachment to others in her heart.

Why? Because as stated in the Bhagavatam, “If a devotee develops affection for anything other than Shri Thakurji, the Lord immediately destroys that object.” Then, knowledge and detachment deepen, and true shelter is realized.

When there is no devotion, the object is taken away, yet the mind continues to depend on others. Seeing the wife’s affection for her son, Shri Acharyaji arranged for him to be taken away as soon as he was born.

She understood and resolved never to see her son’s face. At the time of birth, she even had her eyes covered with a cloth. As soon as the child was born, her mother took him away to her house. There, the son grew up to the age of ten and then became a mlechchha (impure in conduct).

Meanwhile, Damodardas and his wife devoted themselves wholeheartedly to serving Shri Dwarkanathji.

Prasang 8 - The Final Offering of Everything to Shri

Thakurji

At one time, Damodardas left his body. His wife kept this hidden in the house. Later, she told the Vaishnavas, “You hire a boat to take to Adail.” So the Vaishnavas hired a boat and brought it. Then they placed Shri Dwarkanathji and every single item from the house into the boat—even straw was not left behind in the house. Everything in the house was placed in the boat.

The wife then told the Vaishnavas, “Take this boat to Adail. Deliver everything to the temple of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu.” The Vaishnavas took the boat and departed. The boat went about thirty to forty kos (miles).

Afterwards, the wife revealed, “Damodardas has passed away.” The Vaishnavas came and performed his funeral rites.

Then Damodardas’s son—who had become a Turk (mlechchha)—arrived. When he came, he saw that nothing was left in the house except for clay pots filled with water. Seeing this, he struck his head

in grief.

Later, Damodardas's father-in-law came and said to his daughter, "Daughter, you have left nothing in the house. Now how will you eat?" She replied, "Whatever you give, I will eat. Among Kshatriyas at such times, close relatives give support. This is the custom of our community."

Damodardas's wife then took no food or drink and, within a few days, also left her body. The funeral rites for both were performed together.

Some days later, a Vaishnav told Shri Acharyaji about this. Shri Acharyaji said, "This is exactly as it should be." Damodardas and his wife were such recipients of grace, such divine devotees of Shri Acharyaji, that their story has no limit—how can it be fully told?

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): After Damodardas passed away, his wife kept his body hidden because she thought, "My son is a mlechchha. All the possessions belong to Shri Thakurji, so they must be sent away." She filled the boat with all the items and sent them to Shri Acharyaji.

When the boat had gone about forty kos, she made it known that Damodardas had passed. Then his relatives, including his father-in-law, performed his funeral rites. When the son returned and saw that only clay pots with water were left, he tried to find the boat and bring it back but did not succeed. He struck his head in sorrow. This shows that worldly people who attempt to reclaim divine possessions through worldly means will only suffer but will never succeed.

The father-in-law asked, "Nothing is left. How will you survive?" This was a worldly question. But the wife replied with a divine sentiment: "Whatever you give, I will eat. In our Kshatriya tradition, close relatives give support in such situations, and I will sustain myself that way."

Her meaning was: "Shri Thakurji's possessions have gone. Without seva, how can I use them? Since all divine items have departed, I will now live on worldly support." She too soon left her body. The funeral rites for both were performed together.

The Maidservant's Story (Londi ki Varta) – The Hidden

Sakhi and Her Divine Role

That maidservant was highly devoted to the Lord. Her story is not fully written because she is none other than a sakhi (companion) of Shri Yamunaji in her divine form. In lila (divine play), her name was Krishnavesani. She was always immersed in the form of Krishna.

In Dwapar Yuga, she had been Vidurji's wife. At that time, she had such deep love for Shri Thakurji that he often visited Vidurji's house uninvited. Now she came to Damodardas's household and joined during his marriage. She had the bond of Pushti (grace). She always remained absorbed in manasi seva (mental service).

Once, while Damodardas was serving, he thought in his mind, "I should go to Nakhas and buy a horse." At that very moment, a Vaishnav came looking for him. The maidservant said, "He has gone to Nakhas to buy a horse."

The Vaishnav left. Later, someone mentioned this incident to Damodardas, saying, "You were serving at that time, yet the maid said this." Damodardas asked the maidservant about it. She replied, "Where was your mind at that moment? Wherever your mind is, consider your body to be there as well." Damodardas fell silent.

When the boat was filled with all the items, the maidservant too—being like a part of the household's possessions—was placed in the boat and went with Shri Dwarkanathji.

When the Vaishnavas reached Shri Acharyaji, they said, "Maharaj! Shri Dwarkanathji has arrived with all his wealth and possessions." Shri Gopinathji was also present and said, "It is as if Lakshmi and Narayan themselves have arrived."

Shri Acharyaji asked, "Seeing all this wealth, is your mind delighted?" Shri Gopinathji replied, "If your mind becomes attached to Shri Thakurji's possessions, that attachment will be completely destroyed." Shri Acharyaji said, "That is indeed the nature of our path. Still, a little of the wealth pleased Gopinathji, and he had a son, though his lineage did not continue."

Later, Shri Acharyaji instructed the Vaishnavas, "Take all these possessions and offer them to Shri Yamunaji. Bring Shri Dwarkanathji to our house."

Thus, the maidservant, being part of the possessions, also went with

her body to Shri Yamunaji. All the possessions were offered to Shri Yamunaji, and Shri Dwarkanathji was installed at Shri Acharyaji's house. This miraculous story about the maidservant seemed strange to worldly people, which is why Shri Gokulnathji did not reveal it fully and spoke of her only in general terms.

Later, a Vaishnav pleaded with Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! The possessions sent by Damodardas's wife were not accepted by you. Why?" Shri Acharyaji said, "Her son is a mlechchha. If he hears of this, it will create conflict. Wealth is the root of sorrow. Damodardas's wife sent it, and it has been accepted by Shri Maharani (Yamunaji), thereby avoiding worldly conflict."

Varta 4 - Padmanabhdas Kannaujia Brahmin &

Family

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak Padmanabhadas, a Kannaujia Brahmin residing in Kannauj. The sentiment of his story is described here:

Prasang 1 - Padmanabhdas Resolves to Serve Without

Livelihood from Discourses

In the beginning, Padmanabhadas used to sit on a high seat (vyasasan) and narrate discourses in his home at Kannauj. He never went to anyone's house; his income (vritti) would come to him while sitting at home. He lived in this way.

One time, Shri Acharyaji came to Kannauj. Padmanabhadas went to have his darshan. There, from the lotus mouth of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Padmanabhadas heard a discourse on the Bhagavad topics. He then realized: "This is the Supreme Lord Himself. He is Shri Purna Purushottam." Recognizing Shri Acharyaji as Purushottam, Padmanabhadas took shelter under him, received Brahmasambandh initiation, and later performed full self-surrender (samarpan).

After his initiation, during the ceremony of upliftment (utthapan), Shri Acharyaji opened a sacred book. At that time, Damodardas was seated in the house of Sambhalware. Padmanabhadas came from his home, offered prostrations (dandavat) to Shri Acharyaji, and sat down. Then Shri Acharyaji recited a verse from a text:

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पठनीयं प्रयत्नेन सवहेतु ववजितम्। वृत्त्यथ नैव युंजीत प्राणः कण्ठगौर प ॥१॥

Study diligently, free from all ulterior motives. Do not use it (study or recitation) for

earning a livelihood, even at the cost of life or for the sake of protecting your throat

(voice).

तदभावे यथैव स्यात ् तथा नवाहमाचरेत ्। त्रयाणां येन केना प भजन ् कृष्णमवाप्नुयात्॥२॥

In its absence, sustain yourself in whatever way is appropriate. Of the three (ways), by

whichever means one can, worship Krishna and attain Him.

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After hearing this verse, Padmanabhadas, with hands cupped in resolve (anjuli bhar ke sankalp), vowed: “I shall not earn my living by narrating stories.” He made this firm resolve before Shri Acharyaji.

Shri Acharyaji then said: “You need not narrate the Shri Bhagavat for income. But you are a Brahmin. You can recite the Mahabharata and other texts for livelihood.” Padmanabhadas replied: “Maharaj! I have taken a vow. What is vowed must be kept. Therefore, I shall not narrate anything.”

Shri Acharyaji said: “But you are a householder. How will you maintain yourself?” Padmanabhadas answered: “I will not narrate the Bhagavat for livelihood. I will earn by performing rituals in the homes of yajmans (patrons). In this way, I will sustain myself.”

Thereafter, he went to the homes of yajmans for ritual earnings. They showed him great respect. But then, Padmanabhadas felt remorse in his heart: “Earlier I never begged. Now, after becoming a Vaishnav, I go out asking for alms. This does not feel right. Earlier I wore the sacred thread (upavit) and garland (mala). For such a one, begging for a livelihood is not proper.” So he made a new vow: “I will not sustain myself through begging.”

Again Shri Acharyaji asked: “Now how will you manage your livelihood?” Padmanabhadas said: “I will engage in trade like a Vaishya to maintain myself.” Thereafter, he started selling earthen pots and bringing in firewood. He did not consider any other way and continued serving wholeheartedly until the end of his life.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Padmanabhadas is the manifestation of Champakalata Sakhi, one of Shri Swaminiji’s attendants. When Padmanabhadas requested Shri Acharyaji: “We are

Brahmins; we will sustain ourselves through begging," Shri Acharyaji was greatly pleased by his resolve. He said: "The firm resolve (tek) of a Vaishnav is itself the highest dharma." Later, when Padmanabhadas's entire family was accepted (initiated), he asked Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! What is my duty?" Shri Acharyaji replied: "Engage in the seva (service) of Shri Thakurji (Lord Krishna)." Padmanabhadas said: "Maharaj! I have studied many scriptures—Puranas, Mahabharata, and others. It is difficult for me to develop faith in the divine form (svarup) of Shri Thakurji. Only if I see the greatness (mahatmya) of the divine form revealed will my faith become firm. Because faith alone yields fruit." Shri Acharyaji said: "Come with me to Braj. I will show you the mahatmya."

Padmanabhadas went to Braj. Near Mahavan at Ramanasthal on the banks of Shri Yamunaji, Shri Acharyaji was seated. It was early morning. Suddenly, the surface of Shri Yamunaji split into crores of parts. From it emerged a divine form (svarup) as tall as a palm tree, who came before Shri Acharyaji and said: "Please accept my service." Shri Acharyaji replied: "At this time, Vaishnavs do not have the strength to perform your elaborate service and adornments. If the wish arises for such service, it can be done by welcoming you with devotion. Please sit in my lap." The divine form (svarup) then became small and placed its forehead upon Shri Acharyaji's chin. At once, the form grew enormous again. That divine form encompassed Shri Yamunaji, Giriraj (Govardhan), sakhis, sakhas, villages, groves, and all the eighty-four kos of Braj—everything appeared with divine signs.

Shri Acharyaji named this divine form Shri Mathuranathji and said to Padmanabhadas: "Has your heart's wish been fulfilled?" Padmanabhadas, overwhelmed with love, said: "Maharaj! You are my true Lord. By your grace, is there anything impossible?" Shri Acharyaji instructed: "Serve with the feeling of yatha labh santosh—being content with whatever you receive." With permission, Padmanabhadas brought Shri Mathuranathji to his home in Kannauj and began serving him with great love. Initially, he still earned his livelihood by begging. But then a thought arose in Padmanabhadas's mind: "How can I, being called a Vaishnav, go about begging? Shri Acharyaji has said to serve with contentment as per yatha labh santosh. That is the best way." He adopted the principle: "Avyavritto bhajet Krishnam pujaya shravanadibhih. (2)" —meaning he engaged in uninterrupted service with devotion.

Prasang 2 - Faith in the Guru: The Miraculous Boat and Shri

Akkaji's Arrival

Once, Shri Acharyaji was in Prayag. There, Padmanabhdas was also present. At that time, one watch of the night had passed. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Padmanabhdas, "Shri Akkaji is on the other side. Go and bring him here." Hearing this, he immediately got up and left. At that time, five or seven Vaishnavas were sleeping there. They started saying, "The Brahmin has gone mad. Where will he go at this hour? All the boats are tied up. The boatmen have gone home. So how will he be able to cross?"

But Padmanabhdas had full faith in the command of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. He believed firmly that this matter would surely come to pass. So, he went up to the riverbank and started looking around here and there. Just then, suddenly, a boy appeared, bringing a small boat. He asked Padmanabhdas, "Will you cross over?" Padmanabhdas replied, "Yes, yes, I will." So the boy ferried him across.

Afterward, the boy asked again, "Will you return?" Padmanabhdas said, "I will return in about two hours." Then the boy said, "I will keep the boat here. Come back quickly." Later, Padmanabhdas went to the place and respectfully brought Shri Akkaji back. They both sat in that same boat and crossed over. But when they looked back after getting off, neither the boat nor the boy was there anymore.

After bringing Shri Akkaji, Padmanabhdas returned. Shri Acharyaji instructed him, "Go, and rest." Padmanabhdas went back to the place where the Vaishnavas were sleeping. The Vaishnavas asked him, "Where have you been?" Padmanabhdas replied, "I went to bring Shri Akkaji here."

Then all the Vaishnavas said, "You made Shri Thakurji exert Himself greatly." Later, when these Vaishnavas spoke to Shri Acharyaji about it, they said, "Maharaj! Padmanabhdas caused Shri Thakurji to undergo great effort." Shri Acharyaji replied, "Whatever has happened, has happened according to my wish. So you should not say anything to Padmanabhdas about this."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this Prasang, it is established that if a Vaishnav, for the sake of fulfilling the Guru's work, causes even the Lord to undergo effort (labor), it is not considered an obstacle. When the Guru is pleased, all tasks are accomplished successfully. This night was the auspicious moment of Shri Gusainji's manifestation. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji gave the command. Shri Thakurji Himself brought the boat. This shows that for

the sake of Shri Gusainji, all tasks are to be performed without hesitation. It reveals the greatness of Shri Gusainji's form as even beyond that of Shri Thakurji and demonstrates Padmanabhdas's complete faith — that Shri Acharyaji's words never go unfulfilled and that all tasks are indeed accomplished.

Prasang 3 - Sacrificing for the Guru: Padmanabhdas

Redeems a Merchant's Loss

Once, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was going from Shri Gokul to Adel. At that time, a merchant Kshatriya was traveling with him, carrying some goods. That merchant lived in Kannauj, and Shri Acharyaji arrived in the middle of Kannauj.

The merchant was lagging behind, and robbers attacked him. They looted all his goods. Meanwhile, Shri Acharyaji was preparing the meal and offering it to Shri Thakurji. Just then, the merchant came crying and wailing. He asked, "Where is Shri Acharyaji?" Padmanabhdas replied, "He must be taking his meal."

The merchant said, "All my goods have been looted, and Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu is taking his meal!" Padmanabhdas thought to himself, "If Shri Acharyaji hears this, he will stop his meal." So, he decided not to let him hear it.

Padmanabhdas took hold of the merchant's arm and brought him outside. Then he asked, "Tell me truthfully, how much of your goods were looted?" The merchant told him the amount. Padmanabhdas then took the merchant to the shop of a wealthy moneylender. The moneylender welcomed Padmanabhdas with great respect and hospitality.

Afterward, the moneylender asked, "Please, what brings you here?" Padmanabhdas said, "This merchant needs this much money. I will write a promissory note with interest for this amount." The moneylender said, "Padmanabhdasji! Take as much money as you need. Why even bother about a promissory note?"

Padmanabhdas replied, "First, I will write the promissory note, then I will take the money. I will not take it without writing it down." The moneylender said, "As you wish."

Padmanabhdas then wrote the promissory note with interest and pledged his sacred thread and religious ornaments. The merchant took the money and went home.

Later, Shri Acharyaji asked Padmanabhdas, “Where did you go?” Padmanabhdas replied, “Maharaj! I went out for some work.” Shri Acharyaji, who is omniscient, instantly knew everything that had happened. Shri Acharyaji then said to Padmanabhdas, “Why did you get involved with that merchant? If he had remained behind and been looted, what could we have done? But you did it wrong by taking a loan to give him money.”

Padmanabhdas said, “Maharaj! I will repay the loan tomorrow. That is not a big matter. But if the merchant had kept crying and you had to delay your meal even by two moments, then my entire life’s purpose would have been wasted.” Shri Acharyaji then asked, “Why did you pledge your sacred ornaments?” Padmanabhdas replied, “Maharaj! Without pledging them, the money would not have been given.”

Later, Shri Acharyaji proceeded to Adel. Padmanabhdas went to a king he knew. The king requested him, “Please, show me your grace and narrate a story.” Padmanabhdas said, “O King! I will narrate Shrimad Bhagavatam. Or, if you wish, I can narrate the Mahabharata.” The king said, “Good, narrate the Mahabharata.” Padmanabhdas began narrating the Mahabharata.

When the narrative reached the war episode, the listeners became so engrossed in the valor and heroism that they began acting out fights among themselves with kicks and punches. After several days, the Mahabharata narration was completed. The king then began offering a large amount of wealth as a reward.

Padmanabhdas said, “I will not take all this wealth. I have a debt to repay. I will only take as much as is needed to settle it.” He took just enough to pay off the principal and interest to the moneylender. The rest he returned. Such was the devotion of Padmanabhdas.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): When the merchant said, “All my goods were looted, and you are taking your meal?” – the reason behind his words was that he thought, “You are merciful. How can you eat knowing that a soul is suffering?” The truly merciful one removes the sorrow of others first and then takes his meal. Shri Acharyaji asked, “Why did you arrange money for the merchant? You even took a loan. Did we take responsibility for his goods? If he was looted, what could we have done? You acted wrongly because now

you have taken a loan upon yourself. What is the guarantee of this body? If the body perishes, the debt will remain."

Padmanabhdas replied, "If I had let the merchant continue weeping and caused even a moment's delay in your meal, my whole life's purpose would have been wasted. What is the big deal about a debt? I will repay it soon. By your grace, no obstacle will remain." The reason Padmanabhdas pledged his sacred ornaments was twofold: firstly, he believed that one should not accept anything without proper documentation; secondly, it showed his deep surrender to Shri Acharyaji.

He had fully offered himself to Shri Acharyaji. If his Vedic duties had remained separate, he would have sought their fruits in heaven. But he had completely surrendered everything and accepted Pushti Bhakti as his only dharma. That is why Shri Acharyaji asked, "Did you pledge even such sacred ornaments to the moneylender?" But Padmanabhdas had the form of Shri Acharyaji firmly established in his heart. For Shri Acharyaji's happiness, he considered even dharma to be secondary.

He pledged his ornaments and joyfully gave money to the merchant, thinking it a blessing that the merchant had come there. Otherwise, the merchant would have gone around the land criticizing, saying, "I was looted while in the company of Shri Acharyaji. If one is not looted in the company of a worldly king, how could I be looted with such a divine being?" But Padmanabhdas thought, "This is a test of my dharma. My wealth has been taken for the sake of testing my resolve."

By giving money to the merchant, he ensured that wherever the merchant went, he would praise Shri Acharyaji, saying, "He gave me back my wealth with interest." This shows Padmanabhdas's indescribable love for Shri Acharyaji. When the king began offering large rewards, Padmanabhdas did not take more than needed, saying, "I do not recite stories for wealth. That is my vow." All of these actions were done purely for the happiness of Shri Acharyaji. Padmanabhdas then brought back the written bond from the moneylender, returned home, and continued his service.

Prasang 4 - Unshakable Trust: Giving His Daughter in

Marriage Beyond Caste Boundaries

Padmanabhdas had a daughter who was unmarried. For her marriage,

a groom who was a sevak of Shri Acharyaji was desired. So, the Vaishnavas began to inquire about a suitable match. One Vaishnav said, “There is a groom who is a sevak of Shri Acharyaji, but he is a Sanodhya Brahmin.”

As soon as Padmanabhdas heard that he was Shri Acharyaji’s sevak, he paid no attention to worldly customs. The Vaishnav said, “He is a good Vaishnav. You should give your daughter to him.” Padmanabhdas replied, “Alright.” Then Padmanabhdas called for kumkum, applied tilak to the Vaishnav, and said, “I have given my daughter to you. You decide the wedding date, and on that day I will perform the marriage.”

The marriage was performed properly, and Padmanabhdas returned home happily. At home, there was his elder daughter, Tulsa, who had become a widow right after marriage and had never seen her husband’s face. She was deeply engaged in the service of Shri Mathuranathji. Padmanabhdas told her, “I have arranged the marriage of your younger sister with such-and-such Vaishnav.”

Tulsa said, “But he is a Sanodhya Brahmin, and we are Kannaujia Brahmins. How could this happen?” Padmanabhdas replied, “What is done is done.” Tulsa then said, “Break off the engagement.” Padmanabhdas said, “Bring a knife. Cut off the thumb with which I applied the tilak. Only then can the engagement be broken.”

Tulsa asked, “How can we cut the thumb?” Padmanabhdas replied, “Then how can we break the engagement? Only if the thumb is cut can it be undone.” Later, Padmanabhdas performed the marriage. All the people of the caste were upset and murmured among themselves. But Padmanabhdas had such deep trust in the words of the Vaishnav that he did not break off the engagement.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): When Tulsa asked, “How can we cut off the thumb?” Padmanabhdas replied, “When one has offered body, mind, and wealth to the sevak of Shri Acharyaji, how can such an engagement be broken?”

In this way, Padmanabhdas showed Tulsa the path of devotion. From that day onwards, Tulsa’s love for the Vaishnavas grew through the association of Padmanabhdas. Even Shri Thakurji began to grant her experiences of His presence.

Later, Padmanabhdas joyfully gave his daughter in marriage to the Vaishnav. The entire caste gossiped and criticized, but this happened

because where there is no firm love, there exists fear of worldly and Vedic customs. Once firm love in the Lord is established, all worries disappear, and even worldly or Vedic obstacles cannot interfere. Such was the Vaishnav Padmanabhdas.

Prasang 5 - Grace Through Humility: The Kshatriya

Woman's Wish Fulfilled

A Kshatriya woman used to visit Padmanabhdas's house daily. One day, Padmanabhdas's daughter Tulsa asked her, "Kshatriyani! Why do you come here every day?"

The Kshatriya woman replied, "He (Padmanabhdas) is a great saint, a true devotee of God. I have no children, and that is why I come. Please convey my request to Padmanabhdasji."

One day, Tulsa spoke to Padmanabhdas, "This Kshatriya woman has no children. She requests your help." Padmanabhdas said to Tulsa, "Bring water." Tulsa brought the water and placed it before him. Padmanabhdas took the water, turned it into charanamrit (water sanctified by touching his feet), gave it to the Kshatriya woman, and said, "Go. You will have a son. Name him Mathuradas."

Later, the Kshatriya woman bore a son, and he was named Mathuradas.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why did Padmanabhdas give his own charanamrit? A true devotee never tries to show off his greatness. Most likely, he gave the charanamrit of Shri Thakurji. It is said here that Padmanabhdas thought, "This is such a small desire—for a child. Why trouble Shri Thakurji for this?"

Therefore, he gave his own charanamrit. Yet, Padmanabhdas always remained absorbed in the form of Shri Acharyaji. So, even while giving the water, he did so with the sentiment of Shri Acharyaji, without any concern for his own glory or recognition.

One who takes shelter in a true devotee will have all desires fulfilled. What is the matter of a child? The Kshatriya woman had the desire for a son, so a son was born to her. But there was no obstacle in this, for Padmanabhdas did not have any sense of pride in his action.

At that time, he simply acted on the inspiration of his intellect, which

itself was under divine will. A devotee's actions are directed by the Lord's desire, and he does not consider them his own doing.

Shri Gusainji has written: "Buddhi-preraka kṛiṣṇasya pādapaṁ praseedatu" – "May the inspiration of the intellect come from the feet of Krishna." Whatever happens is due to Krishna's inspiration. If someone thinks it is their own doing or another's, they are still wandering in the ocean of samsara.

Thus, Padmanabhdas gave his own charanamrit, but not with the thought, "Through my charanamrit a son will be born." Everything happens only by the will of God. This principle is clearly shown here.

Prasang 6 - Enduring Hardships for Thakurji's Return from

the Mughal

Once, Bade Ramdasji took his worshipable Shri Thakurji from Padmanabhdas's house to have the darshan of Shri Nathji. At Shri Nathji's temple, Ramdasji stayed on Shri Acharyaji's command and began serving Shri Nathji. During this time, Padmanabhdas was serving his Shri Thakurji at home. After some days, Mughal soldiers attacked the village and looted it. One Mughal took Shri Thakurji away. Padmanabhdas stayed with that Mughal for seven days, without eating or drinking anything.

On the eighth day, the Mughal's wife said to him, "This Brahmin has not eaten or drunk for seven days. If he dies, the sin of killing him will fall on you. He is a servant of God. Return his deity to him." Then the Mughal gave Shri Thakurji back to Padmanabhdas. Taking Him, Padmanabhdas returned home. He bathed, gave Shri Thakurji a bath with Panchamrit, dressed Him in new clothes, adorned Him with ornaments, prepared food, offered it at the appropriate time, and distributed Mahaprasad to the Vaishnavas. He too partook of Mahaprasad.

On the same day that Shri Thakurji was taken by the Mughal, Bade Ramdasji somehow came to know about it. From that day, Ramdasji also refrained from eating for seven days, although he continued serving Shri Nathji with great care. Padmanabhdas, sitting at home, became aware of this and felt deep sorrow for Ramdasji. He went to Shri Nathji's temple to have darshan and meet Ramdasji. After the darshan, he met Ramdasji.

Padmanabhdas said to him, “You felt sorrow, and that is natural because you had taken my Thakurji into your service. But why did you abstain from Mahaprasad for seven days?” Ramdasji replied, “What you say is true, but I have served Him for many years. Therefore, I felt this much connection.” After staying there for a few more days, Padmanabhdas took leave from Shri Nathji and Ramdasji and returned home to Kannauj. He resumed his service to Shri Thakurji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This prasang shows that when the deity of a Pushtimargiya Vaishnav comes into one’s home, there should be no difference in the sentiment of service. One should see the deity as related to Shri Acharyaji and serve with full devotion. Ramdasji’s sentiment also shows that a devotee should never be indifferent when serving another’s Thakurji. One should feel their pain as one’s own and their joy as one’s own.

Prasang 7 - Contentment in Service: Refusing Help and

Remaining Steadfast

Once, Padmanabhdas thought, “I should go with my family and Shri Thakurji to have darshan of Shri Acharyaji and hear the nectar of his words.” So, he went to Adel with his family and Shri Thakurji. They stayed there for a few days. But Padmanabhdas was in great financial difficulty. For Shri Thakurji’s offerings, he prepared small portions, like a single ladle of lentils, a small amount of rice, a handful of kheer, and a small portion of each vegetable. He prepared these in separate piles, offering each one by name. Shri Thakurji accepted all the offerings with love.

This continued daily. One day, a Vaishnav informed Shri Acharyaji about Padmanabhdas’s way of offering. Shri Acharyaji decided to visit Padmanabhdas’s house at the time of bhog (offering). He asked Padmanabhdas, “Why are there so many small piles of food?” Padmanabhdas explained, “This is lentils, this is rice, this is kheer, this is curry, this is vegetables,” and so on, naming each item.

Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji felt deeply moved. He understood that Padmanabhdas was doing this because of financial constraints but was not making any effort to seek help. Shri Acharyaji recognized his great patience and saw how pleased Shri Thakurji was with him. Later, Shri Acharyaji returned home and told Shri Akkaji, “There is great

financial difficulty at Padmanabhdas's house. He offers small portions daily."

That evening, Shri Akkaji prepared a large amount of food and sent it to Padmanabhdas's house through a Vaishnav. Tulsa informed Padmanabhdas, "This food has come from Shri Acharyaji's house." Padmanabhdas replied, "Now I understand. They have found a way to support us. Carefully keep the food aside."

The next day, Shri Akkaji again sent food in the evening. When Tulsa informed Padmanabhdas, he said, "We should take leave tomorrow morning. Keep this food aside too." The next morning, they prepared Shri Thakurji's royal offering and got ready to leave. Padmanabhdas went to Shri Acharyaji and said, "Maharaj! With your permission, we wish to return home."

Shri Acharyaji asked, "Where is Shri Thakurji?" Padmanabhdas replied, "Maharaj! He is on the boat." Shri Acharyaji granted leave but thought in his heart, "Why is Padmanabhdas leaving so quickly?" Shri Akkaji then explained, "We sent food for two days, but he returned it untouched." Shri Acharyaji said, "He left because he didn't want to accept it. Otherwise, he would not have gone." Thus, Shri Acharyaji spoke these words. Padmanabhdas returned home and resumed his service.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This prasang teaches that the Guru's wealth is even greater than Shri Thakurji's wealth. In the Shrimad Bhagavatam (Canto 11, Chapter 17, Verse 28), it is said: "One should bring alms and place them before the Guru. Only if the Guru commands should one eat; otherwise, remain hungry. Never take even begged food without the Guru's permission." So how could one take the Guru's wealth without permission? Shri Acharyaji also wrote in Vivekdhairyaashraya: "Endure three kinds of suffering patiently."

When the Mughal took Shri Thakurji, Padmanabhdas could have destroyed everything, but he chose to endure. He went seven days without food and told no one. He endured physical suffering, the humiliation of his daughter's widowhood, caste criticism, and hardships in food and drink, yet he never abandoned his dharma.

As Shri Gokulnathji wrote in Shri Sarvottam Tika: "Among millions of Vaishnavas, Padmanabhdas is rare." He recognized the path of Shri Acharyaji and knew Shri Acharyaji's form as divine. That is why Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was always pleased with Padmanabhdas. His stories are beyond description, but we speak of them as far as words

allow.

Padmanabhdas's daughter Tulsa

Now about Shri Acharyaji's sevak Padmanabhdas's daughter Tulsa. The sentiment of her story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this divine play, Tulsa is the sakhi of Padmanabhdas. Padmanabhdas himself is Champakalata among the eight principal sakhis. And Champakalata's sakhi is Manikundala, just like the coiled light of a jewel shining all around. In the same way, Tulsa is a sattvik devotee. She is always ready to act upon the command of Padmanabhdas.

Prasang 1 - The Vaishnav Who Refused Mahaprasad

One day, a Vaishnav came to Tulsa's house. He was a sevak of Shri Acharyaji. He had gone for darshan of Shri Mathuranathji and had attended the Rajbhog Aarti. Then Tulsa said to that Vaishnav, "Get up, take a bath. Have Mahaprasad." That Vaishnav replied, "I will go home and bathe there." Tulsa remained silent. After that, the Vaishnav got up and went to his home. Tulsa felt great sorrow in her heart, thinking, "The Vaishnav left my house hungry."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason he did not take Mahaprasad was because he did not accept it for the sake of social custom. Tulsa understood this, and so she did not insist. This Vaishnav was a Gaud Brahmin and, in the divine play, is the sakhi of Lalitaji, named Saurabha. From her body emanates the fragrance of attar and roses. This Vaishnav is Lalitaji's sakhi, while Tulsa is the sakhi of Champakalata. Tulsa's heart belongs only to Shri Mathuranathji. Therefore, the Vaishnav did not take Mahaprasad, as how could he take it without Lalitaji's command? So the Vaishnav went to his home, and Tulsa felt deep sorrow in her heart.

She thought to herself, "Perhaps he did not take the sakhdi (unmixed) Mahaprasad due to social custom. That's fine, but tomorrow I will surely serve him the complete Mahaprasad." Later, she sieved flour and prepared the ingredients, and then went to sleep. That day, Tulsa herself did not take Mahaprasad. That night, Shri Mathuranathji spoke to Tulsa in a dream, saying, "In the morning, serve that Vaishnav Mahaprasad. That Vaishnav will not take Mahaprasad at his home."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This indicates that tomorrow the Vaishnav will take Mahaprasad. Do not worry. Afterwards, Shri Thakurji informed that Vaishnav, “Why didn’t you take Mahaprasad at Tulsa’s home? Take it there in the morning. This is also Lalitaji’s command. Lalitaji herself says, ‘Take Mahaprasad at Tulsa’s home. There is no difference between our sentiments.’”

Prasang 2 - The Vaishnav Accepts Mahaprasad

The next morning, Tulsa prepared puris. She woke Shri Thakurji and began serving and decorating Him. Meanwhile, the Vaishnav, after bathing in the morning and having performed tilak, mudra, and remembrance of God, came to Tulsa’s house after visiting Shri Thakurji’s seva.

When Tulsa finished offering bhog and came outside, she greeted the Vaishnav with “Jai Shri Krishna.” Tulsa then said, “Get up, take a bath, and remember the Lord.” The Vaishnav replied, “I have bathed and come here after purification.” (It is also said in the Varta that after bathing, he did tilak and mudra and remembered God.) When it was time, Tulsa prepared Rajbhog, performed Aarti, and the Vaishnav had darshan. After completing seva to Shri Thakurji, Tulsa came out and placed a plate of Mahaprasad before the Vaishnav. The plate contained puris, boora (powdered sugar), dahi-thara (curd preparation), and sandhana (sweets). She said, “Please take Mahaprasad.”

The Vaishnav said, “I will not take this. Place the sakhdi Mahaprasad, I will take that.” Tulsa replied, “Do not hesitate, this is simply a matter of social custom.” The Vaishnav said, “That is true. Earlier I thought the same way, but now I have received the command. Therefore, I will now take sakhdi Mahaprasad.” Then Tulsa placed both the sakhdi (unmixed) and anasakhdi (mixed) Mahaprasad before him. The Vaishnav accepted the sakhdi Mahaprasad, took it, and then went to his home. Tulsa felt great joy in her heart.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that when a Vaishnav comes to the house, one should honor them to the best of one’s ability. Why? Because in the Bhagavatam it is said, “A house where even water is not offered respectfully to guests should be known as a snake’s hole.” Thus, Tulsa’s affection and respect towards the Vaishnav was of such a deep and loving nature.

Prasang 3 - Tulsa’s Humility Before Shri Gusainji

Once, Shri Gusainji came to Tulsa's house again. At that time, Tulsa served him with great devotion, serving even more attentively than she did for Shri Thakurji. Seeing this, Shri Gusainji was very pleased.

One day, after having his meal, Shri Gusainji was resting. Tulsa began speaking about the Lord's divine pastimes (Bhagavad Varta) to please Shri Gusainji. While Tulsa, in her great joy, was narrating these stories, Shri Gusainji spoke from his lotus mouth, "The descendants of Padmanabhadas should all be like this."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning here is this—Tulsa is, in the divine play (Leela), a Sakhi (female companion). Why should she not be like this? In this pastime, Shri Gusainji represents Chandravali. Thus, he has a Parakiya Bhava (love in the mood of a lover not bound by marriage) toward Shri Thakurji. Because of this, he delights in playful humor. So he teasingly asked, "Does Shri Thakurji reveal his loving sentiments to you? After all, you too are a Sakhi. You have won over Shri Thakurji through your service. So, are you not also a part of our shared circle?" In this way, he spoke in a tone of affectionate teasing.

However, Tulsa was purely Sattvic (in the mode of goodness). She was not inclined toward sarcasm or teasing. She remained thoughtful and composed. Later, Shri Gusainji asked Tulsa, "Does Shri Thakurji reveal his loving feelings to you?" Tulsa replied, "Maharaj! Now we eat to our heart's content and sleep fully. But we do recite Shri Acharyaji's scriptures daily."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): To eat fully and to sleep fully—this means that whatever divine nectar (Rasa) our hearts can hold, as much as we are vessels for, Shri Thakurji reveals to us. Thus, sleeping soundly with Shri Thakurji means resting peacefully in his presence. This is because Tulsa's love is in the Swakiya Bhava (the mood of a wedded beloved). Therefore, she feels content and without anxiety. This is the main meaning.

In the mood of a disciple, the meaning is: "Maharaj! For many births, I wandered separated from Shri Thakurji. In none of those births was my hunger ever satisfied, nor did I find peaceful sleep. But now, by your grace, I have taken shelter at Shri Thakurji's feet. So in this birth, my hunger has been satisfied, and I sleep peacefully, having taken refuge in Shri Thakurji. All my previous births were spent in ignorance and suffering."

In a mood of humility, the meaning is: "What experience could Shri

Thakurji reveal to me? I simply eat and sleep like an animal, whose only concern is food and rest. Even when forced, animals act only when driven. Likewise, I am engrossed in the pleasures of eating and sleeping. People criticize, saying, 'She is a descendant of the great Padmanabhadas, yet she does not serve.' Such are the opinions of others for the sake of social prestige. So why would Shri Thakurji reveal anything to me?" Surdasji has sung: "Sūr, what need to guide the lowly? They only fill their stomachs and sleep."

I am such a lowly person, unworthy of mention. My body desires only comfort. That is the kind of person I am. Yet, I always recite Shri Acharyaji's scriptures. The meaning of this is that even such a fallen soul as I, by merely reciting Shri Acharyaji's scriptures—without even understanding their deep sentiments—finds that Shri Thakurji reveals himself completely.

Thus, Tulsa did not attribute any of this to her own efforts. Instead, she credited Shri Acharyaji's grace, saying that the Lord bestows his mercy through the recitation of his texts. These words, wrapped in humility and love, filled Shri Gusainji's heart with deep emotion.

Such was the divine Tulsa, upon whom Shri Gusainji was always pleased. For this reason, there is no end to her story. It can only be told up to a certain point.

Padmanabhdas's son's wife Parvati

Now about Shri Acharyaji's sevak Padmanabhdas's son's wife Parvati. The sentiment of her story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): She is a rajasi (royal-natured) devotee. Padmanabhdas is Champakalata among the eight principal sakhis. Her sakhi is Sucharita, and here Sucharita became Purushottamdas Mehra, a Kshatriya. He performs all actions beautifully and gives happiness to all. Sucharita's sakhi is Rupvilasini, and here she became Parvati. In the divine play, Parvati's form was very beautiful. She was Rajasi and took great care of her appearance. Due to her pride in her beauty, she fell from divine play.

Prasang 1 – Parvati's Illness and Divine Realization

Parvati served Shri Thakurji very well. Purushottamdas Mehra knew her closely. When he would travel to Kannauj, he stayed at her house.

Once, Purushottamdas Mehra came to Kannauj and went for darshan of Shri Gusainji. At that time, Parvati's hands and feet turned white. She felt ashamed and humble. Then she remembered her previous form: "I am the sakhi of Purushottamdas. My work will be fulfilled through him." She wrote a letter to Purushottamdas: "Please request Shri Gusainji on my behalf. My body has become like this. Because of this, I feel great shame while serving."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning is that I had pride in my beauty before Shri Thakurji, and now I am experiencing its result. If Shri Gusainji is merciful, please request him on my behalf. She sealed the letter and sent it to Shri Gusainji through Purushottamdas. Purushottamdas read the letter aloud to Shri Gusainji and placed the seal before him, requesting on her behalf. Shri Gusainji said to Purushottamdas, "I will say something in two or four days."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This happened because of her pride in her beauty in the divine play. Upon reflection, there were no other offenses found. Three days later, Shri Gusainji told Purushottamdas, "Write to Parvati: in a few days her physical suffering will end. She should not feel shame in service. Shri Thakurji will remove her illness in a short time."

Purushottamdas wrote to Parvati, including Shri Gusainji's words, and sent the letter. When the letter reached Parvati, she read it and became happy. She began serving without any shame or hesitation. After three or four months, her hands and feet became well again. She became very joyful and started serving enthusiastically.

Then she wrote another letter to Shri Gusainji, sending it through Purushottamdas Mehra. In it, she wrote: "It is by Maharaj's grace that I have been cured." She also sent an offering. Purushottamdas read the letter to Shri Gusainji. Shri Gusainji was very pleased. Parvati was such a devoted Vaishnav that she always acted according to the Lord's command. Therefore, Shri Gusainji was always pleased with her. Her story is endless; only so much is spoken here.

Padmanabhdas's grandson, Parvati's son Raghunathdas

Now about Shri Acharyaji's sevak Padmanabhdas's grandson, Parvati's son Raghunathdas. The sentiment of his story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, Parvati is Rupvilasini, a rajasi (royal-natured) devotee, and Raghunathdas is

named Gunabhiranya. He possesses many qualities. What others may take a whole day to do, he accomplishes in an hour. He is tamasi by nature. Both he and Parvati are sakhis of Sucharita of equal standing. Both are obedient to Purushottamdas Mehra.

Prasang 1 - Raghunathdas's Study and Shri Gusainji's Guidance

Raghunathdas went to Kashi. There he studied many scriptures and then came to Shri Gokul. He had darshan of Shri Gusainji and offered full obeisances. Shri Gusainji, knowing him as the sevak of Shri Acharyaji, honored him greatly. Shri Gusainji used to narrate the katha of Subodhiniji, and he seated Raghunathdas in front. One day, Paramanand Soni asked Raghunathdas, "You have studied many scriptures in Kashi. So today Shri Gusainji has narrated katha. Please explain it."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Gusainji honored Raghunathdas greatly, knowing him as the sakhi of Shri Acharyaji's sevak Padmanabhdas. Paramananddas, in the divine play, is Chandrika. Like the brightness of the moon, his body radiates. Shri Gusainji (Shri Chandravaliji), surrounded by many forms of the moon, has him as an intimate associate. Therefore, Raghunathdas spoke words with a feeling of hesitation.

Raghunathdas said to Paramanand Soni, "If you ask truthfully, I do not understand anything. I do not know the traditions of Shri Acharyaji's path nor the principles of the path." At this, his pride and honor were humbled.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that studying scriptures, Vedas, and Puranas does not lead to understanding the principles of Shri Acharyaji's granths. Only through grace can one know them. It is by grace alone that understanding comes. Afterward, Paramanand Soni spoke to Shri Gusainji, "Maharaj! Raghunathdas does not seem to understand anything." Then Shri Gusainji taught Raghunathdas the meanings of four granths and explained the path's system: In Siddhantarahasya, he explained all the principles of the path. In Krishnashraya, he firmly established one's shelter in Krishna. In Navratna, he removed concerns related to worldly and Vedic matters. In Sevaphala, he described the fruits of seva.

Thereafter, Raghunathdas began to understand. He started knowing the inner meanings of Shri Gusainji's katha, the nature of the divine

play, and became a great scholar.

Prasang 2 - Raghunathdas's Solitary Service and Realization

Some days later, he returned to Kannauj and, after seeking permission, engaged in Bhagavad-seva with increased affection. Then he said to his mother Parvati, "I will now become independent and perform Shri Thakurji's seva."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This implies that Parvati and Raghunathdas are sakhis of equal standing. Parvati is rajasi, and Raghunathdas is tamasi. Parvati, through seva, had bound Shri Thakurji to herself. Seeing this difference, Raghunathdas could not bear it and thought, "Shri Thakurji has been won over by her devotion. Now I will also try to bind Him through my seva." He told Parvati, "I will perform seva independently."

Parvati replied, "Go ahead and serve. Love is not to be divided. Everything will happen by Shri Acharyaji's grace." Afterward, Raghunathdas began serving independently. His mother Parvati would bring water, clean vessels, and manage all preparations for Shri Thakurji. Raghunathdas, in his solitary house, would lay a simple leaf plate and offer food with devotion. Afterward, he would take a sip of water and eat. He gave up all royal foods, comforts, and pleasures, performing seva in this manner for four days.

Then Shri Mathuranathji spoke to him, "You are blessed. You have not stopped serving Me. You have renounced all your comforts and endured much hardship. But now, at least sometimes, dine properly. In your house, when you lay down on the bare floor, it makes a sound."

Parvati then said, "Maharaj! But every day in Raghunathdas's house, He prepares rice, kheer, curries, and other items with care. Why does the floor creak?" Shri Thakurji replied to Parvati, "It is your food that pleases Me. That is why I dine alone in your house."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that it is love that pleases Shri Thakurji, not prideful offerings of elaborate meals. Though He ate in Raghunathdas's house, it was only due to Shri Acharyaji's grace. Yet, what Parvati offered delighted Him greatly. Shri Thakurji also told Parvati, "When I say I will dine in My house, you must prepare all the items. Afterward, you will partake as prasadi. That will give Me joy."

Thus, Parvati thought of making Shri Thakurji happy and hurriedly went to her house to prepare rice, curries, and everything needed. She resolved, “Whatever pleases Shri Thakurji, I must do.”

Afterward, Raghunathdas served for a few more days and then realized, “Parvati’s seva was done without pride. That is why Shri Thakurji was pleased with her. My seva, done with pride, is not pleasing to Him. If I join with the Bhagavadiya (devotee) and serve, then Shri Thakurji will be pleased. If I act out of pride, even this seva will be lost.” This realization came due to Shri Gusainji’s teaching of the path’s principles and his grace.

Then Raghunathdas said to Parvati, “Mother! Now you alone perform the seva. I will do as you instruct. I made a mistake.” Parvati bore no resentment. She was a pure devotee. Happily, she began cooking again, and Raghunathdas took up duties like arranging the deity’s ornaments. Serving together in this way, love grew between them. They began to experience equal devotion.

Thus, Padmanabhdas’s family became extraordinary. In this way, seven Vaishnavs arose. But since Padmanabhdas’s family and descendants are considered as one, they are counted as a single story, i.e., fourth story.

Varta 5 - Rajo Kshatrani

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak Rajo Kshatrani. The sentiment of her story is described here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Rajo Kshatrani in the divine play is the sakhi of Lalitaji. Her name is Ratikala. Rati means love, and kala means an art or skill. So, Ratikala means one who is skilled in the art of love or in the art of divine play that brings joy to Shri Thakurji and Shri Swaminiji. She is deeply absorbed in this sentiment and does not know anything else. She prepares various offerings for Shri Swaminiji. At night in Nikunjas and such places, she would bring milk and other items. This was Lalitaji's service. Similarly, Rajo's vow was to prepare and bring the necessary items every night to Shri Acharyaji. In the divine play, Ratikala often felt intense longing, thinking, "When will I be so fortunate as to serve Shri Swaminiji in this way?" She wondered how she could receive such a chance since this was Lalita's intimate service, and Lalitaji is extremely dear and the one who accomplishes all the divine plays. This longing deeply pained Ratikala's heart. Now, would Shri Acharyaji (Shri Swaminiji) fulfill her desire and remove her anguish?

There was a Brahmachari Brahmin named Narayandas. He prepared kheer and was told by Shri Gokulchandramaji to offer it to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji asked, "How did you get it cooked?" Later, it was confirmed through the words of Shri Gokulchandramaji's scriptures.

Here, Rajo Kshatrani would daily take her share of buttermilk without fail as part of her regular vow. She reflected on the sentiment of divine play and, being a one-pointed and exclusive devotee, her love at times crossed the boundaries of decorum. This was her pure love. Her love sometimes made the norms of worldly conduct vanish. Immersed in the rasa of the divine play, she accepted all tasks connected with service.

Prasang 1 – Rajo Refuses to Give Ghee

Rajo used to prepare food items every night and bring them for Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, which was her regular vow. One day, it was the Shraddha day of Lakshman Bhatt. Shri Acharyaji had invited

Brahmins for a feast. There was a need for more ghee. Shri Acharyaji asked a Vaishnav, “Go and bring ghee from Rajo’s house.” The Vaishnav went and told Rajo, “Shri Acharyaji has asked for ghee.” Rajo replied, “Why has he asked for ghee?” The Vaishnav explained, “Today is the Shraddha day of Lakshman Bhatt. Shri Acharyaji has invited Brahmins for a meal, and there is a shortage of ghee. That is why he asked.”

Rajo replied, “I don’t have any ghee. Go back and tell him.” The Vaishnav returned and informed Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! Rajo says she doesn’t have any ghee.” Shri Acharyaji said, “Go once more and firmly tell her to give the ghee.” The Vaishnav went again and said, “Shri Acharyaji is upset. Please give the ghee.” Even then, Rajo refused and said, “I don’t have any ghee. From where should I give it?” The Vaishnav returned again and told Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! Rajo is not giving the ghee.” Eventually, ghee was arranged from another place to manage the feast.

Later that night, Rajo prepared her offerings and came to Shri Acharyaji. But Shri Acharyaji turned his back to her. Rajo said, “Maharaj! This soul is full of faults. What offence have I committed that you are not giving me darshan?” Shri Acharyaji asked, “Today was Lakshman Bhatt’s Shraddha. Why didn’t you give the ghee?” Rajo answered, “Maharaj! I had no ghee.” Shri Acharyaji asked, “Then how did you prepare these offerings?”

Rajo replied, “Maharaj! There was ghee in your own house. Why did you not use that?” Shri Acharyaji said, “That ghee belonged to Shri Thakurji. How could it be taken?” Rajo replied, “Who else is there in my house? You are the very form of Shri Thakurji. How could I give what was meant for your divine play to a worldly Shraddha feast? I am not a sevak of Lakshman Bhatt. I am your sevak. You tested me by sending the Vaishnav first. At that moment, out of worldly attachment, I said there was no ghee. But then when you asked directly, I realized that in Pushti service, anger or insistence has no place because everything is accomplished through love. And following worldly decorum, the action might fail if the substance is given outside its context.

Later, if you had asked with the force of Pushti’s divine impulse, I would have surely given the ghee. When the Vaishnav came the third time, had he said, ‘In your Pushti-dharma there is no harm, please give the ghee,’ I would not have refused. Maharaj! Should I knowingly fall into a worldly trap? By your grace alone, I had this discernment and did not give the ghee. You are the inspirer of intelligence, sitting

in my heart and not prompting me to give it."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This is why it is stated in the Shiksha Patra that Shri Thakurji's commands are of three types: worldly (laukik), transcendental (alaukik), and Vedic (vaidik). The worldly command relates to family care, food, and bodily comfort. The Vedic involves pilgrimages, deity worship, and rituals. The transcendental leads to union with Bhagavan. Each has its distinct fruit: worldly for the world, Vedic for heavens, and transcendental for attaining Bhagavan. Due to this distinction, Rajo did not give the ghee.

Shri Acharyaji, pleased, granted her darshan. Rajo placed the offerings before him and said, "Please partake." Shri Acharyaji said, "Today was Shraddha, so I will not take a second meal." Rajo replied, "Maharaj! If it is for the sake of people's decorum, then do not take. But this is for you; you must accept it."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning is that she asked him to partake in his own divine form with the sentiment of divine play. Where would there be room for worldly decorum when absorbed in divine play? The mind should be surrendered fully in this state. Fulfill the wishes of the devotees. Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji entered the divine play mood. The rules of decorum vanished, and he partook of the offerings. As Paramandandaji has sung, "Hari, your divine play brings such bliss."

Hearing her words, Shri Acharyaji lost bodily consciousness for three days, completely immersed in the divine play. Thus, he fulfilled Rajo's heartfelt desire. Therefore, Rajo is a one-pointed, transcendental devotee.

That day, out of Rajo's persistence, Shri Acharyaji accepted the offerings. This Rajo Kshatrani is a recipient of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's special grace and purely Bhagavadiya. Hence, her story cannot be fully expressed. Where can one stop narrating it?

Varta 6 - Seth Purushottamdas & Family

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Seth Purushottamdas, who lived in Kashi. The sentiment of his story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Seth Purushottamdas is accompanied by Damodardas from Sambhal. When he went to Kashi to buy copper plates, on that very day he received the fortune of Shri Acharyaji's darshan. Shri Acharyaji was on his first circumambulation of the earth and had arrived in Kashi. Seth went to Manikarnika Ghat and had darshan of Shri Acharyaji there.

He asked Krishnadas Meghna, "Is this the same Shri Acharyaji who refuted the Mayavada philosophy in King Krishnadeva's court in the southern region?" Krishnadas Meghna replied, "Yes, this is the same." Then Seth Purushottamdas went before Shri Acharyaji, bowed down flat on the ground, and made a humble request: "Maharaj! Please show your grace and accept me under your shelter. Kindly purify my home with your presence."

Seeing Seth Purushottamdas's humility, Shri Acharyaji came to his home. There, he gave names to Seth, Seth's daughter Rukmini, Seth's son Gopaldas, and others in the family, and initiated them with Brahmasambandh. Then Seth asked, "Maharaj! What should I do now?" Shri Acharyaji said, "Perform Bhagavad seva (service to the Lord) following the path of Pushtimarg."

At Seth's home, there was already Shri Madan Mohanji Thakur. Seth invested around fifteen thousand rupees to build a new house. When the foundation was dug, Shri Madan Mohanji Thakur was found there. Along with this, a great amount of wealth was uncovered, said to be sixty crore.

After some time, Seth's father performed Shri Madan Mohanji's seva (service) and then left his body. Later, Seth continued the seva for many years and earned great wealth. Shri Acharyaji performed Panchamrit Snan (a bath with five nectars) of Shri Madan Mohanji, placed him on a seat, and then placed the deity on Seth's head.

Seth Purushottamdas, in the divine play (leela), is a sakhi (female

companion) of Shri Swaminiji. Her name is Indulekha. Seth's daughter Rukmini is Indulekha's sakhi named Modini, and Seth's son Gopaldas is Indulekha's sakhi named Gaanakala.

Seth Purushottamdas performed royal service for Shri Madan Mohanji. There was a tradition of offering fifty-two types of betel leaf preparations (bavan beeda). The reason for this is that in the divine leela, offering betel leaves is a service of Indulekha. Therefore, Seth maintained this tradition of fifty-two betel preparations.

Of these, twenty were offered with the sentiment of Shri Thakurji (Shri Krishna), and thirty-two were offered with the sentiment of Shri Swaminiji. The meaning behind this is: Shri Thakurji loves firm faith (vishwas), so the twenty betel leaves represented steadfast faith towards Shri Thakurji. Shri Swaminiji loves adornment (shringar), so the thirty-two betel leaves symbolized the doubled efforts of adornment, making thirty-two. In this way, Shri Swaminiji was pleased.

Thus, it is shown that every service Seth Purushottamdas performed was done with deep devotion. This included all offerings of materials, clothes, ornaments, and more. His service to Shri Madan Mohanji was carried out even more intensely with the sentiment of serving Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu.

As a result, Shri Acharyaji became pleased and showed Seth the divine darshan of Shri Madan Mohanji's feet in two colors – fair and dark. The meaning of this is: the whole body being fair represents Shri Swaminiji's divine form, and the feet being dark represents Shri Krishna's divine form. The dark color of the feet indicates that in the secret divine leelas of Nikunj and others, Shri Thakurji is dependent on the feet of Shri Swaminiji. Thus, through Shri Thakurji, Shri Acharyaji revealed his own service to Seth Purushottamdas.

In this way, Shri Acharyaji showed special grace upon Seth Purushottamdas. He performed Panchamrit Snan for Shri Madan Mohanji, placed him on a seat, and then placed the deity on Seth's head.

Prasang 1 – Seth Purushottamdas Offers Mahaprasad to

Vishweshwar Mahadev

Seth Purushottamdas, though living in Kashi, never went for darshan of the main deity Vishweshwar Mahadev, who is considered the king of Kashi. One night, Vishweshwar Mahadev appeared to Seth Purushottamdas in a dream and said, “If you do not maintain any worldly relations, at least keep a relation with Vaishnavas. And sometimes offer us Mahaprasad as well.”

The next morning, Seth Purushottamdas, after completing his seva, took a small container of Mahaprasad and some betel leaves and went to the temple of Vishweshwar Mahadev.

The people of the town were astonished and wondered why Seth, who never visited, had come today. Many people followed Seth out of curiosity. Seth carried the container of Mahaprasad and four betel leaves, and while remembering Shri Krishna, he walked towards the temple.

There were many senior Brahmins present, and they said to Seth Purushottamdas, “Why didn’t you offer a full prostration? It is not proper to simply rise and walk while remembering Shri Krishna.” Seth Purushottamdas replied, “It is our practice to remember Bhagavan in all actions. You can ask Vishweshwar Mahadev about it.”

Among the Brahmins was one who was very dear to Mahadev. Mahadev spoke through this Brahmin and said, “I myself asked Seth for Mahaprasad. It is indeed their practice to remember Bhagavan at all times. Do not say anything more to them.” After that, on special occasions, Mahaprasad began to be taken to Vishweshwar Mahadev with great celebration.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that after Seth Purushottamdas became a sevak, all the people in his circle followed his command regarding wealth and religious acts. Mahadev understood that since all would now become singularly devoted, his own glory might diminish. Moreover, in Kali Yuga, the command of Bhagavan is to turn souls towards external devotion. Seth Purushottamdas spread bhakti so effectively that Mahadev felt he could not match it. Therefore, he devised this plan: Seth should bring Mahaprasad to him, and thus people would continue coming to his temple. If anyone questioned why, the reply would be, “If even Sethji goes, then why shouldn’t we?” Mahadev is deeply devoted to Bhagavan. In this way, people were turned towards external practices. However, it is worth noting that though Seth himself went, Rukmini and Gopaldas never went, saying, “How can we go?” This indicates that not everyone receives the highest fruit. Thus, even Seth Purushottamdas went.

Prasang 2 – Kalbhairav Guards Seth Purushottamdas’s

Home

One day, Vishweshwar Mahadev instructed Kalbhairav, who was the Kotwal (guardian) of Kashi, “Seth Purushottamdas often returns home late at night from Vaishnavas’ houses. Keep watch over his home so that no trickery, theft, or disturbances occur.”

From then on, Kalbhairav would stand guard at Seth Purushottamdas’s house every night. One night, as Seth was returning from a Vaishnav’s house at midnight, he noticed someone standing near the door of his home. He turned back and asked, “Who are you?”

Kalbhairav replied, “Mahadevji has ordered me to keep watch over your house. I am here on guard duty every night.” Seth Purushottamdas said nothing and simply opened the door and went inside.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that Seth Purushottamdas was such a recipient of Bhagavan’s grace. Yet, he would personally accompany offerings of wealth to Vaishnavas, and therefore, he always stayed in their company. Why? Shri Acharyaji has written, “Poshakabhave tu shithilam,” meaning that in the absence of nourishment (support), the mind becomes weak and bhakti diminishes. Nourishment comes from satsang (holy company).

Mahadev placed Kalbhairav as a guard because Kashi was full of ghosts, illusions, and thieves. Mahadev thought, “Bhagavan has given me rule over Kashi, so if any disturbance happens here, it will reflect on me. If any harm comes to a devotee, Bhagavan will be displeased with me. Sethji has graciously offered me Mahaprasad; I take nothing from him. Therefore, I must at least ensure protection.”

Thus, Mahadev ordered Kalbhairav to keep watch. If any mishap occurred, the punishment would fall on Kalbhairav’s head. Therefore, Mahadev himself did not go but assigned Kalbhairav to the duty.

Prasang 3 – A Brahmin Seeks Initiation Through Seth

Purushottamdas

A Brahmin from the southern region came to Kashi. He was a devotee and very dear to Mahadevji. Whenever Mahadevji appeared to him, only then would the Brahmin eat or drink.

One day, the festival of Janmashtami arrived. Seth Purushottamdas celebrated Janmashtami with great decoration and devotion. On the day of Janmashtami, Mahadevji went to Seth Purushottamdas's house. He came the next day in the afternoon after the celebration of Nand Mahotsav.

When the Brahmin had darshan of Mahadevji, he asked, "Why did I not see you yesterday? Today I saw you in the afternoon; what is the reason for this?" Mahadevji replied, "I went to watch the celebration of Janmashtami at Seth's house yesterday morning. So I have come back only now."

Then the Brahmin asked, "Who is this Seth, at whose house you go to watch celebrations?" Vishweshwar Mahadevji said, "He is a great devotee of Bhagavan, superior even to us."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is that Seth was a Pushtimargiya (grace-filled path) devotee of Bhagavan, while we are devotees of the Maryada (regulated path). Then the Brahmin said, "Make me such a devotee of Bhagavan as well." Mahadevji replied, "Go and become a sevak of Seth Purushottamdas. He gives names; he has the command of Shri Acharyaji." The Brahmin requested, "You give me the name yourself." Mahadevji said, "The name I give will not bear fruit."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This means that the name given by us would make him eligible only for the path of Maryada Bhakti (regulated devotion). The right to Pushtimarg lies only with those blessed by the lineage of Shri Acharyaji.

Then the Brahmin went to Seth Purushottamdas's door and sent a message to him. Among the people it was said, "A Brahmin has come to meet you." Seth said, "He has probably come to have his head shaved."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is that Mahadevji's devotee would listen to the name, but firm devotion would take a long time to ripen in him. Later, Seth came out after finishing his seva. The Brahmin bowed down in full prostration before him. Seth said, "Why are you doing this inappropriate thing? I am a Kshatriya, and you are a Brahmin; how can you prostrate to me?" The Brahmin said, "Give me the name and make me your sevak." Seth replied, "I do not give names to anyone, nor do I make anyone my sevak."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The one who gives names and accepts sevaks is Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. This was something the Brahmin did not understand. The Brahmin insisted greatly, but Seth did not give him the name. The Brahmin returned to Mahadevji and said, “Seth is not giving me the name.”

Vishweshwar Mahadevji then said, “Go back again and tell Sethji that Mahadevji has sent me. If you refuse now, you will not get another chance.” The Brahmin went back to Sethji and said, “Mahadevji has sent me. Please give me the name.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is that the soul belonged to Pushtimarg. Therefore, Seth should give the name. Seth then gave the Brahmin the name, joined his hands, and said “Jai Shri Krishna.” The Brahmin asked, “You have given me the name, so why are you now joining your hands in greeting?”

Seth replied, “We give the name by the command of Shri Acharyaji. Your true Guru is Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. When Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu arrives, you should take the name again from him. For now, you have been given the practice of remembering Bhagavan.”

Later, the Brahmin went to Adail and received formal initiation into Shri Acharyaji’s lineage. He stayed for some time and then returned to the southern region, where he lived as a Vaishnav.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): There may be a doubt here—Mahadevji went to Seth’s house to watch the Janmashtami celebration. This is a leela related to Shri Acharyaji. Gopaldas has sung, “This path is not for those where Vidhi (rules) and Har (Shiva) do not have entrance.” The meaning here is that Seth’s house was a place where the complete divine leela of the Saraswat Kalpa was manifest. All divine plays took place there. Mahadevji’s visit was an experience of a fragment of this divine leela. This indicates that the Thakurji of Shri Acharyaji’s lineage reveals the complete form of the Supreme Purushottam only to Pushtimargiya Vaishnavs. Followers of other paths do not have such darshan. Therefore, Mahadevji told the Brahmin, “Become Seth’s sevak; then you will be accepted into Pushtimarg.”

Prasang 4 – Seth Purushottamdas Teaches Gopaldas About

True Seva

One day Seth Purushottamdas was sitting in the temple, busy arranging the temple garments. From a distance, Gopaldas saw him and thought in his mind, “Now Sethji has become old. So I should now take up the service with full dedication.”

Gopaldas came after bathing. Knowing the thought in Gopaldas’s mind, Seth called him, “Son! Come closer.” When Gopaldas came near, he saw Seth as a young man of about twenty-five years.

Seth Purushottamdas then said to Gopaldas, “A devotee of Bhagavan is always youthful. But even then, one should respect the appearance of age. So from today onward, do not let such a thought come into your mind.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is that Gopaldas thought, “I am young, Sethji is old; now I should take up the seva.” But Seth considered this thought a mistake and said, “How will you serve? Only those upon whom Shri Acharyaji bestows his grace are made to serve Shri Thakurji. What is young or old in this matter? Never think like this again.” In this way, he humbled and instructed him directly. Why? Because in the divine leela, Gopaldas is a sakhi (female companion) of Seth. So who else would explain this to him if not Seth?

Prasang 5 – Seth Purushottamdas Refuses the Siddha

Brahmin’s Gem

At one time Seth Purushottamdas traveled to the south. There, in Jharkhand, is the Mandar mountain, on top of which resides Mandar Madhusudan Thakur. It is said about this mountain that if a person falls from it unknowingly, they do not get hurt. But if someone deliberately falls from the summit, they leave their body, and in their next life, their desires are fulfilled. Such is the renowned greatness of this mountain among people.

Once, during Shri Acharyaji’s circumambulation of the earth, he visited there. At that time Seth Purushottamdas and a Brahmin Vaishnav renunciate also went together and stayed there overnight, sleeping on the mountain. At midnight, Shri Thakurji himself came in the form of a siddha Brahmin. Seth did not speak. The Vaishnav companion asked, “Who are you?” The Brahmin replied, “I am a Brahmin who resides on this mountain. Who are you?”

The Vaishnav said, “We are sevaks of Shri Vallabhacharyaji.” Then the Brahmin said, “I have a gem. Will you take it?” The Vaishnav replied, “What quality is there in a gem?” The Brahmin said, “Whatever wealth you desire, the gem will provide.” The Vaishnav renunciate said, “What use do I have for it? Jagdish will provide me with a seer of flour wherever needed. Give it to Seth Purushottamdas; he is a householder with many expenses.” The Brahmin said, “Then wake Sethji.”

The Vaishnav woke Sethji and said, “Take this gem. It will give you as much wealth as you desire.” Seth Purushottamdas replied, “I have no need for a gem.” The siddha Brahmin took the gem and left. The Vaishnav then asked Sethji, “Why did you not take the gem?” Seth replied, “Why didn’t you take it? It was first offered to you.”

The Vaishnav said, “I am a renunciate. What would I do with a gem? Jagdish will give me a seer of flour wherever needed.” Seth said, “If Jagdish can give you a seer of flour, will he not give me ten seers as well? Is Jagdish in any way limited? Brahmin, are you mad? Should I leave the refuge of Shri Thakurji and take refuge in a gem?” Later, Seth returned to his home.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): There is much subtle meaning in this episode. Why did Seth leave his seva and go to the south? Was there some desire in his mind? Why did he go to Mandar Madhusudan Thakur? It is said that Seth wished to see the birthplace of Shri Acharyaji, and so he went south.

At Mandar Madhusudan Thakur’s place, it is said that Madhusudan Thakur told Seth, “By your gracious arrival at this mountain, its sins will be removed. Many sinners come here, and some fall deliberately from the mountain’s summit, having heard of its glory. Their sins are very great. All the holy places like the Ganga are waiting for a Bhagavadiya to purify them. Since you have come to this region, purify it. Your own spiritual position will not be harmed, as you are under the refuge of Bhagavan. Your coming will increase the sanctity of this pilgrimage place.”

So Seth went up the mountain. There he was offered the gem and tempted, but Seth was desireless and had no fear. Therefore, one who is desireless has the strength to purify a pilgrimage place; for the one with desires, even a pilgrimage place can become an obstacle.

It is also said that the mountain’s greatness is such that if one falls from it, their wishes are fulfilled. This shows that if a soul falls from

Pushtimarg due to desire, they end up seeking the fulfillment of worldly desires.

Seth's refusal to accept the gem means that even if unsolicited fruits come, they are an obstacle if they bring other entanglements. Desire surely leads to seeking refuge elsewhere. Therefore, Seth told the renunciate Vaishnav, "Brahmin, you are mad." The reason is that any fruit such as gems that comes to give results should not even be spoken of—it should leave on its own. This was the strength of Seth's steadfast refuge.

Prasang 6 – Shri Acharyaji Visits Seth Purushottamdas's

Home in Kashi

Once, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came to Kashi and stayed at Seth Purushottamdas's house. Seth performed Panchamrit Snan (bath with five nectars) for his Thakur Shri Madan Mohanji and offered bhog before taking his own meal.

Then Damodardas Harsani requested Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! Why is it so? Why is Panchamrit used to bathe the Thakur here?" Shri Acharyaji replied, "Although he gives names by my command, even then such decorum must be maintained."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is that when a sevak serves, the sins of the disciples come before him. If the Guru is powerful, he burns those sins. Although Seth gives names by my command and is a devotee of Bhagavan, how could sins affect him? Still, as a matter of decorum, when the Thakur is bathed with Panchamrit, the five-element body of the sevak also becomes purified. This is a secondary sentiment. The higher sentiment is that Seth serves Shri Madan Mohanji in the same mood as Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji performed Panchamrit Snan, offered bhog in the form of Shri Govardhandhar. This is the main sentiment to understand.

Prasang 7 – Seth Meets the King of Kashi While Doing

Household Work

Another day, the King of Kashi wished in his mind, “I should meet Seth Purushottamdas.” The king lived across the Ganga and came in the morning. At that time, Seth was wearing a simple small cloth and was collecting cow dung.

Seth’s people said to him, “The king is coming to meet you. Wear fine clothes and sit on a seat.” Seth replied, “Let him come. Why should I fear the king?” When the king arrived, Seth came before him with hands full of cow dung. The king was wise and said, “Sethji! You are blessed. In this world, only you have renounced honor and fame.”

Seth replied, “I am a householder. I must do the work of the home.” The king was pleased and returned home. In this way, Seth had no desire for prestige. He considered caring for cows and doing household work as his duty.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is that just as service to Shri Thakurji is the highest honor, so is service to cows. This is truly household work. Worldly and Vedic duties are only external. Seth expressed this sentiment.

Prasang 8 – Shri Acharyaji Celebrates Janmashtami at Seth’s

Home

While serving in this way, Janmashtami arrived. Shri Acharyaji celebrated the birth festival at Nandaraya’s house, and with the mood of divine play, he held the cradle and Nand Mahotsav celebrations. Nandaraya, Yashodaji, and the gopis and gopas were all present in their divine forms. The Nand Mahotsav was indescribable. Seth Purushottamdas, Rukmini, and Gopaldas all received darshan of this.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This is because they are all participants in the divine leela. Later Shri Acharyaji told Yashodaji and the gopis and gopas, “It is not appropriate for you to appear directly in this age.” They all said, “Where you appear in your Swamini form and hold the festival, why should we not be there?”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Now we will all appear in suitable forms.” From that day, Shri Acharyaji established the tradition of wearing special attire for Janmashtami celebrations. In this way, the first birth festival was held at Seth Purushottamdas’s house. After that, Seth would daily swing Shri Madan Mohanji in the cradle and remain

constantly absorbed in the mood of the birth festival.

Prasang 9 – Shri Acharyaji Refutes Opponents in Kashi with

a Single Page

Many debaters came to Shri Acharyaji. Debates would last till evening. Without eating himself, Shri Acharyaji would not allow Vaishnavs to take Mahaprasad. Then Shri Acharyaji composed the “Patravalamban” granth (treatise) on a single page and gave it to a Vaishnav, instructing him, “Place this on the wall of Vishweshwar Mahadevji’s temple and say: all pandits, seers, and debaters who have doubts may read this. If you cannot answer, come to Shri Acharyaji.”

The Vaishnav took the “Patravalamban” granth, placed it on the wall of Mahadevji’s temple. All the Mayavadi debaters gathered there. The Vaishnav said, “If you have doubts to ask Shri Acharyaji, read this first.” All read it, and no one could respond. They were silent and said, “Shri Acharyaji is surely Ishwar (God). In this small text, he has silenced thousands of Mayavadis.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Placing it at Mahadevji’s temple meant, “What I have written, your chosen deity Mahadev is witness to it. So whatever issues you have, bring them forth. And here in Kashi, the king is Vishweshwar Mahadev. We are placing this dispute before him. Mahadev will bear witness to the truth and falsehood. If you still do not accept it, Mahadev himself will punish you.”

In this way, by invoking Mahadev as witness, all the pandits were defeated. Just as Braj Bhumi and Shri Krishna are dear to Pushtimargiya Vaishnavs, Kashi and Mahadev are dear to the seers. Without establishing Mahadev’s greatness in Kashi, bhakti could not spread in the world. Earlier, seers even harmed Vaishnavs out of enmity. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji demonstrated the greatness of Kashi and Mahadev through the “Patravalamban” granth so that no pandit or debater dared to speak against any Vaishnav again.

Prasang 10 – Seth Purushottamdas Brings Brinjal for Shri

Madan Mohanji’s Seva

There was a maternal uncle among Seth's close relatives. He would always say to Seth, "Let us go to Gaya; I will go with you." Seth replied, "We will go when we get some free time." A month passed. Then the maternal uncle insisted repeatedly, saying, "Come, let us go to Gaya." Seth arranged for two carts. On one cart were Rajbhog offerings, and Seth followed behind.

They had traveled about five or six kos (miles) when they passed a field of brinjals. The farmer there had picked beautiful brinjals and filled a large basket. Seth's eyes fell on them. Seth stopped the cart, thinking, "This vegetable would be suitable for Shri Madan Mohanji's royal offering."

Seth asked the farmer, "How much for the brinjals?" The farmer said, "One rupee." Seth gave him a rupee, loaded all the brinjals onto the cart, and told the driver, "Quickly drive the cart back home. I will give you one rupee for it."

At home, Shri Madan Mohanji said to Rukmini, "Quickly get up, bathe, and start preparing puris. Seth is bringing vegetables." Rukmini replied, "Maharaj! Seth has gone to Gaya." Shri Thakurji said, "Seth has completed his Gaya pilgrimage. He is on his way back. Get up and start the preparations."

Rukmini bathed. Flour was already prepared in the house, so she started making puris. A quarter of the night passed. Some puris were still left to be fried when Seth arrived at home and called out.

Gopaldas opened the door. Seth asked Rukmini, "What time is it?" Rukmini replied, "The puris are ready, but the vegetable is not." Seth said, "I have brought the vegetable." Rukmini said, "Quickly prepare it; only a few puris are left." Then Seth and Gopaldas together prepared the brinjal curry. Rukmini readied all the items. Seth also bathed and then offered the bhog to Shri Thakurji.

Seth told Gopaldas, "Quickly gather five or ten Vaishnavs and bring them here." Gopaldas brought the Vaishnavs. By then, the bhog was completed. The night offering was made, aarti was performed, and Shri Thakurji was put to rest. Afterwards, Seth, along with the Vaishnavs, partook of Mahaprasad.

Later, the maternal uncle returned from Gaya after a few days and asked, “Why did you return early?” Seth replied, “Why are you asking me? There was some work at home, so I came back.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This episode establishes the principle that when you see excellent ingredients, you should immediately remember your Lord. Purchase them even at a high price without quarreling. Act according to your capacity. Know that all Vedic duties are insignificant compared to the dharma of Bhagavat seva. When one serves in this way, Shri Thakurji is pleased. Because of Seth’s loving devotion, Shri Thakurji eagerly accepted the royal offering. Thus, it is this very affection that becomes the cause of the Lord’s delight.

Seth Purushottamdas’s daughter, Rukmini

Now we speak of Seth Purushottamdas’s daughter, Rukmini, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. This is her story, expressed with deep sentiments.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Rukmini is, in the divine leela, a sakhi (companion) of Shri Swaminiji named Indulekha. Her own sakhi is Modini. She is ever eager in serving Shri Thakurji. Modini is one who brings joy (anand) to others; therefore, her name is Modini.

Prasang 1 – Rukmini Accepts Refuge in Shri Acharyaji’s Lotus Feet

Once, Rukmini came into the refuge of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Shri Acharyaji gave her the divine Name. Thereafter, he initiated her and accepted her fully. Rukmini became deeply blessed.

Once Shri Gusainji came to Kashi. At that time, a solar eclipse occurred. Shri Gusainji went to bathe at Manikarnika Ghat. Rukmini too, after bathing Shri Madan Mohanji, came to bathe at Manikarnika, knowing Shri Gusainji was there. She finished bathing and changed into fresh clothes.

A Vaishnav told Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! Seth Purushottamdas’s daughter has come to bathe in the Ganga.” Shri Gusainji said, “Rukmini! Come forward.” Rukmini came forward. Shri Gusainji asked her, “After how many years have you come for Ganga snan?”

Rukmini replied, “Maharaj! I last came for Ganga snan twenty-four years ago.”

Hearing Rukmini’s words, Shri Gusainji’s heart was filled with joy and wonder—so absorbed was she in seva that she had no occasion for Ganga snan all these years.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here one may wonder—she bathed in the Ganga twenty-four years ago, and now she came again because Shri Gusainji was present. But it is not for the sake of Ganga snan itself that she came; since becoming a sevak, she had no need for such occasions. She remained fully immersed in seva. Shri Gusainji, seeing Rukmini, said, “Shri Thakurji will never be free of her debt.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is like what Shri Thakurji said to the Braj devotees in the Rasa Panchadhyayi: “Your devotion is such that I will forever remain indebted to you.” So too is Rukmini’s devotion, and Shri Thakurji will remain ever indebted. Shri Gusainji expressed this very sentiment.

Prasang 2 – Rukmini’s Service During Kartik Month

In Kashi, many women of the Kshatriya community would bathe in the Ganga during Kartik, Magh, and Vaishakh months. Rukmini said to Seth Purushottamdas, “Shall I do Kartik snan if you permit?” Seth replied, “Do as you wish. Take whatever you need.” Rukmini said, “Please have ghee and sugar brought. Flour is already at home.” Seth brought ghee and sugar.

On the last watch of the night, Rukmini rose and prepared more ingredients than usual. From Mangala Aarti to Rajbhog, she offered all to Shri Madan Mohanji. Later, after bathing before the Uttapan (waking aarti), she prepared more and offered from Uttapan to Shayan (night rest).

This continued for many days. Seth then asked Rukmini, “I have never seen you going for Kartik snan. When do you bathe in the Ganga?” Rukmini replied, “What need do I have for Kartik snan? Kartik snan is for those with desires. I bathe in this way daily.” Hearing this, Seth Purushottamdas was deeply pleased.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here one may doubt—why did Rukmini take ghee and sugar from Seth in the name of Kartik snan if her intention was seva? If she had said it was for offering, would

Seth not have provided the ingredients? The answer is this: just as in Braj, the young girls (Kumarikas) devoted themselves to Shri Thakurji and, desiring a unique divine experience, told Yashodaji they wished to worship Katyayani Devi and bathe in Shri Yamunaji during the month of Margashirsha. Yashodaji, with the consent of Shri Nandaraya, provided them ghee, sugar, and all materials for worship. They combined Katyayani's worship with Yamunaji's and offered seva with deep love.

In the Purushottama Sahasranam, Shri Acharyaji says, "Katyayani vrat vyaj sarvabhava 'ashritanganah" meaning, "Even under the pretext of Katyayani vrat, when all feelings merge and the Lord is served with complete absorption, that is true surrender." In the same way, Rukmini invoked Kartik, Magh, Vaishakh, and other occasions as names but served Shri Madan Mohanji with Braj-like devotion.

This shows that just as no one truly grasped the inner moods of Braj devotees, no one could fully understand Rukmini's inner devotion. Not even Seth Purushottamdas could fathom the depth of Rukmini's heart —it was so profound.

Prasang 3 – Rukmini Attains the Lord

Once, Rukmini's body became weak and unwell. Then Rukmini said, "It is good if this body departs now. What is the use of a body from which no service to Bhagavan can be rendered?" Later, by the will of Bhagavan, her body departed. Some Vaishnavas then went to Shri Gusainji and said, "Maharaj! Rukmini has entered the Ganga." Shri Gusainji replied, "Do not speak like that. Say rather, 'The Ganga has attained Rukmini.'"

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why so? Because at the banks of the Ganga many beings leave their bodies, but how often does the Ganga receive such a Bhagavadiya (one absorbed in Bhagavan)? Thus, Shri Gusainji spoke these words from his own lips.

The reason is that Bhagavadiyas purify even the Ganga and other sacred places. Nandadasji too has sung in the Panchadhyayi: "Ganga and other sacred places are purified when such Bhagavadiyas walk upon the earth." The appearance of a Bhagavadiya in this world is solely for the upliftment of life. Just as the appearance of Bhagavan is to uplift, so too is the appearance of a Bhagavadiya.

In the granth "Pushtipravaha Maryada," Shri Acharyaji writes about the nature of a Bhagavadiya:

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"तरमाजीवाः पिुष्टमाग भन्ना एव न संशयः । भगवदूपसेवाथ तत्सिृष्टनन्यथा भवेत ् ॥।१२॥।

“In essence, the souls of the Pushtimarg are different from worldly beings, without

doubt. They are created solely for the purpose of serving Bhagavan, not for anything

else.”

स्वरूपेणावतारेण लंगेन च गुणेन च। तारतम्यं न स्वरूपे देहे वा तित्क्रयासु वा॥१३॥।

“In form, in descent, in attributes, and in actions, there is no distinction between

Bhagavan and a Bhagavadiya. Just as there is no difference in Bhagavan’s form, there is

no difference in a Bhagavadiya’s form, body, or deeds.”

✿✿✿

In this way, Shri Gusainji described the qualities of a Bhagavadiya, all of which were present in Rukmini.

This Rukmini, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, was such a blessed Bhagavadiya. Her story is beyond measure and cannot be fully told, but this much can be said.

Seth Purushottamdas’s Son, Gopaldas

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu’s sevak, the son of Seth Purushottamdas, Gopaldas. The sentiment of his story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Seth Purushottamdas, in the divine play (Leela), is Indulekha, a companion of Shri Swaminiji. The sakhi (companion) who expresses herself through the art of singing is this one. The art of singing about the pain of separation mixed with divine union, as seen among the devotees of Braj, is reflected in Gopaldas. From this, it becomes clear that Gopaldas remained forever absorbed in divine separation (virah).

Prasang 1 – Gopaldas's Devotion Through Song

Gopaldas had a heartfelt connection with Shri Madanmohanji. Whatever he wished for, he would ask and receive. Shri Madanmohanji always showered him with grace. Gopaldas sang kirtans extensively.

Once, on the day of Holi, Gopaldas was overwhelmed by intense separation (virah). The joy of Holi, which usually invokes feelings of union, faded from his heart. Then, just like the Braj devotees sing “Venugit” and “Yugalgit” daily, Gopaldas sang two kirtans in that mood, calling them “Lalana.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of “Lalana” here is that just as the women of Braj sing in separation, Gopaldas too sang in the same emotion.

As he sang the Lalana, Shri Thakurji appeared before him with full divine Leela (pastime). Gopaldas offered himself completely and sang: “Madanmohan ke barne bali bali das Gopal” (“I, the servant Gopal, offer myself again and again at the feet of Madanmohan.”)

Prasang 2 – Gopaldas's Final Days in Divine Separation

Some days later, Gopaldas’s body became weak. He began chanting the holy names of Bhagavan. Shri Madanmohanji Himself responded to his call and showed great mercy. At night, Gopaldas would fall asleep. Then suddenly, he would wake and cry out in separation, calling, “Shri Madanmohanji!” From the temple, Shri Thakurji would reply, “Why do you call out? I am right near you.”

Gopaldas would say, “Maharaj! Why are you staying awake? It has now become my nature to cry out to you.” Then Madanmohanji would say, “I cannot bear your separation anymore. That is why I come to comfort you.” In this way, Gopaldas would lock the temple and courtyard, lay a single cloth, and lie down in divine separation with his head on the doorstep.

He had no awareness of bodily comforts. Therefore, he sang many kirtans filled with the emotion of separation. Gopaldas studied all of Shri Acharyaji’s texts like Subodhini, Nibandh, and Shri Gusainji’s Rahasya Granths, referring to them regularly.

He would serve Bhagavan at the appropriate times. He gave up all worldly and scriptural engagements, including business and trade, and remained absorbed in the nectar of divine Leela. Shri Gusainji was

greatly pleased with Gopaldas and would say, “This is how the family of Seth Purushottamdas should be.”

The state of separation is indescribable. Therefore, the story of Gopaldas has not been told in detail. The story of Seth Purushottamdas and his family is one and the same. In this way, eleven Vaishnavs were there, but since the story is counted with the family, only six Vaishnavs are considered.

Varta 7 - Ramdas Saraswat Brahmin

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Ramdasji, a Saraswat Brahmin who lived in the east. The sentiment of his story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play (Leela), this Ramdasji is a companion (sakhi) of Radha's intimate friend. Her name is Prem Manjari. She is among the group of young maidens (Kumarikas).

Ramdas's father possessed great wealth, but had no son. He worshiped the sun (Surya) intensely. Then, being pleased, Surya granted him a son. When Ramdasji turned eight, his father arranged his marriage. Soon after, the father left his body. Later, Ramdas came into contact with a Vaishnav of the Maryada Marg (path of discipline). That Maryada Vaishnav asked, "Have you gone on any pilgrimages?" Ramdas replied, "My father passed away. How can I leave the house now?"

Then the Maryada Vaishnav said, "Well, Ganga Sagar is near your place. At least come there to bathe. Come, I will go with you." Ramdas agreed and went with that Vaishnav to Ganga Sagar. They stayed there for three days. On the fourth day, after bathing, they began to prepare food on the banks of the Ganga Sagar by spreading a little sand.

At that time, the form (svarup) of Shri Lalji emerged from there. Ramdasji, having bathed in the waters of Ganga Sagar, said to the Maryada Vaishnav, "I have attained the divine form of Bhagavan." Then the Maryada Vaishnav said, "You are truly fortunate. Worship Him well. But whose disciple are you?" At that time, Ramdasji was sixteen years old. He replied, "I am not yet a disciple of anyone." The Maryada Vaishnav said, "I can initiate you if you desire."

Ramdas replied, "I will return home and take initiation along with my wife." Then the Maryada Vaishnav said, "Shri Vallabhacharyaji, who refuted the doctrine of Mayavada in Kashi and the South, is now staying at Purushottampuri. If you attain his shelter, you will be truly blessed." Hearing this, Ramdasji quickly returned home with the form of Shri Thakurji.

Maryada Vaishnav remained at Ganga Sagar. Ramdas made the fourth halt on his journey and by midday reached a garden outside a village. Shri Acharyaji had arrived at Purushottampuri a day before and was staying there. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Ramdas, “How did you attain the divine form of Bhagavan at Ganga Sagar? Show it to me. Your name is Ramdas.”

Ramdas stood amazed, thinking, “I just arrived and have not shown the form of Bhagavan to anyone. This must be a great Mahapurush (divine being).” He turned to a nearby Vaishnav and asked, “What is this great person’s name?” Krishnadas Meghna replied, “This is Shri Vallabhacharyaji, famous throughout the world! He refuted Mayavada and established the path of Bhakti.”

Then Ramdas prostrated fully (sashtang dandavat) and humbly pleaded, “Maharaj! Please come to my home.” Shri Acharyaji said, “You are a Saraswat Brahmin. How will you renounce food relations with Kshatriyas?” Ramdas replied, “By your grace, I have much wealth. I will not maintain any food relation with anyone. Whatever you instruct, I shall do.”

Then Shri Acharyaji, being pleased, came to Ramdas’s home. There, along with his wife, Ramdas offered Naam Samarpan (formal surrender through name initiation). He bathed Shri Thakurji with Panchamrit, seated Him on a platform (paat), and named Him Navneetpriyaji. Shri Acharyaji stayed for five nights at Ramdas’s home and taught him the complete method of seva (devotional service). Then Shri Acharyaji proceeded on his journey to perform parikrama (circumambulation) of the Earth.

Prasang 1 – Ramdasji Lives in Constant Purity

Ramdasji lived in a state of complete non-contact (apras) at all times. Even while drinking water or eating betel leaves, he remained in non-contact.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that he never spoke to worldly people. He had no dealings or trade, and he had even renounced the company of women. He served Bhagavan in this manner.

Shri Thakurji had great affection for him. He also had great wealth. But within a few days, the wealth became less.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This means that he had even

a trace of pride in his wealth. So, in order to remove this reliance on anything other than Shri Thakurji and to cultivate humility, the wealth was reduced.

Then Ramdas thought, “I must find a way to earn some wealth.” In the eastern regions, people used to weave cloth, and they were called ‘tantis’ (weavers). He gave them money as a loan on interest. That interest started to come in large amounts, and Ramdasji felt some joy in his heart. So Shri Thakurji commanded, “Have you placed Me on the weavers?”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is – “You used to live with love and devotion for Me. But first, you relied on your wealth. When the wealth diminished, you relied on interest. That interest came from the weavers. How can I accept service offered from that interest money, which is impure? How can I reside in such a service?” Upon hearing this command, Ramdas became shocked.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): He thought, “Alas! I have done a terrible deed. Whatever is now the wish of Bhagavan, I will accept. But I will never again do such a thing.”

Then he went to the weavers and said, “Return all my money.” The weavers replied, “You are receiving interest. So how can we give back the capital? And now you're asking for it so soon?” Ramdasji said, “I have started working with children. Whatever the child says, I follow.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This means that a child’s way of thinking is contrary. Sometimes he puts toys up high, sometimes he puts others down, sometimes he breaks them. Similarly, it is the Lord’s nature – to do, not to do, and to do otherwise – He is capable of all. He does as He pleases. This is the principle being taught. But the weavers thought he must have a child. So, they collected all the money and gave it to Ramdasji. He brought it home and began doing seva (service). But within a few days, all the money was gone.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Now the dependence on wealth is gone. But the pride that came earlier because of it, the seed of that pride – Shri Thakurji would now remove that completely.

Then Ramdasji began borrowing on credit from a merchant. Soon he accumulated debt. That merchant began to demand repayment. So Ramdas stopped borrowing from him and started borrowing from

another merchant.

One day, that previous merchant pressured him strongly and said, “If you will no longer borrow from me, then pay back my money!” After much pleading and explaining, Ramdas left, but he was very distressed due to the shame.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this way, the past fault of pride was removed. Then Shri Thakurji, taking the form of Ramdas, went to that merchant and repaid the entire debt. He gave 100 rupees extra and wrote in the account with his own hand under Ramdas’s name. Ramdasji could not bear the pain.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): He thought, “Because of the suffering I underwent, Shri Thakurji Himself repaid the debt. But why did he give 100 rupees more?” The reason was – if even a little joy or pride were to arise due to the excess wealth, then the fruit of Pushtimarg would be lost, and the servant’s attitude would vanish.

Shri Thakurji repaid the debt. Ramdas stayed at home. He still had about 100 rupees left. This was for testing him. Later, he had a small debt again from another merchant, and some expenses also came up.

One day, a Vaishnav came to call Ramdasji. He went with him. While passing by the market of that previous merchant, he tried to avoid being seen, thinking, “He might ask me again.” The merchant saw Ramdasji and thought, “He is avoiding my gaze. I had demanded payment from him many times.”

So, the merchant came forward and fell at Ramdasji’s feet. He said, “It is my misfortune that you no longer borrow from my shop. But you still have 100 rupees more with me – please come and take it.” Ramdasji replied, “I’ll come later. I am going to work now.”

Then the merchant went to the shop. Ramdasji thought in his heart, “I never gave him any money. So perhaps it was Shri Thakurji who gave it.”

He went to the Vaishnav’s place, finished some work involving cleanliness and touch, and then went to that merchant’s shop and said, “Bring out my account.” The merchant said, “You paid the account and even wrote in your own hand that I owed you 100 rupees extra. Please check it again.” Then Ramdas saw Shri Thakurji’s signature in the account and remained silent. Then he returned home and thought, “Now I should not stay at home. I should take up a job.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason was that if he stayed at home, Shri Thakurji would have to bear the burden, as he would eat the Lord's wealth. And the affection of a wife is ordinary; she would consume it. So, he bought a horse, tied on weapons, and came to Prayag to take up a job. Even then, he continued to eat betel leaves in non-contact (apras) form.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that there was some pride in his apras, like "no one else can maintain this kind of purity." So Shri Thakurji made him give up that apras and removed his pride. It also shows – what is the use of such purity, where Shri Thakurji Himself has to suffer?

Later, one day, Ramdasji came from Prayag to Adail to have darshan of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. He came wearing five garments and carrying weapons, and bowed down. Then Shri Acharyaji saw Ramdas and said, "Blessed he is." The Vaishnavs sitting nearby said, "Maharaj! Why are you calling him blessed now? He has given up his apras, he lives like a soldier, he carries weapons?"

Shri Acharyaji replied, "He is blessed. He does not make Shri Thakurji suffer. There is no one with such patience. I say this from my own mouth."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is – how much can be done by apras alone? The path of grace (Pushtimarg) is very difficult. All the wealth was gone, debts mounted, but he never lost his patience. Why? Because his mind remained fixed on Shri Thakurji. Even within his heart, he never felt the pain of worry. Later, when Shri Thakurji repaid the debt, he did not even feel happy. He took up a job. Now, humility had come to him. His mind remained with Shri Thakurji. Because of this, Shri Acharyaji called him blessed.

Prasang 2 – Filling the Pool for Shri Acharyaji's Bath

Now, in front of Shri Acharyaji's door, there was a pool. He came there to bathe and said, "Is this pool still not filled?" Saying this, he proceeded towards the Yamunaji for a holy bath. Then all the Vaishnavs started filling the pool. At that time, Ramdasji took a large basket and filled the pool completely, making it level with the ground, exactly where Shri Acharyaji had bathed. Then Shri Acharyaji saw Ramdas filling the pool. Seeing his clothes covered in dust, Shri Acharyaji became pleased and said, "Ramdas is blessed."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): From this, we see that while other Vaishnavs removed their upper garments and wore only a dhoti to fill the pool, Ramdas, upon hearing Shri Acharyaji's command, considered it a great fortune to serve and filled the pool without any concern for status or shame. Shri Acharyaji was very pleased with him for this. This shows the principle that in divine service, one should not be concerned with prestige or dignity. Even lowly or menial service should be considered a blessing and performed with devotion.

Later, in one year, Ramdasji earned a large sum of wealth and returned home. After that, he began doing service with even greater care.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This was to test Thakurji's patience. Afterwards, what use is wealth? Whatever is needed is automatically fulfilled.

Prasang 3 – Ramdasji and the Desire for a Child

One day, his wife said, "You should marry again so that there will be children."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for this was that the wife did not know Ramdas's inner feelings. So, she thought, "He is not pleased with me. Let him marry someone else." He did marry again, and one son was born.

Then Ramdas said, "I have no desire for a son." The wife replied, "But I desire to have one son." Then Ramdas said, "If that is your wish, then serve Shri Navneetpriyaji in the mood of a child. Just like you feed and care for a child, serve Him the same way. Your wish will be fulfilled." A few days later, a son was indeed born.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Ramdasji had spoken an emotional, divine truth — "If you serve Shri Thakurji in the mood of a child, then a child will be born to you. You will attain the good fortune of Yashodaji." Only if the wife was a worthy devotee would she understand this. So, with the desire for a son, she served Shri Thakurji in the childlike mood. And Shri Thakurji gave her a son.

However, she did not attain the spiritual fruit that Ramdas had, because Ramdas's mind never turned toward worldly desires. That is why Shri Acharyaji remained pleased with him. What can be said about the depth of Ramdas's devotional feelings?

Ramdas was such a recipient of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's grace — he was divinely blessed. The extent of his story cannot be fully told — only a part of it can be described here.

Varta 8 - Gadadhardas Saraswat Brahmin

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Gadadharadas Kapil, Saraswat Brahmin who lived in Kada. The sentiment of his story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): That Gadadharadas used to go every year to the holy pilgrimage site of Prayag for the Makar Sankranti bath. Once, Gadadharadas was at Prayag. At that time, Shri Acharyaji also arrived there. Many scholars came to Shri Acharyaji to have discussions.

Gadadharadas's uncle used to live in Prayag, and Gadadharadas stayed at his place. His uncle was a scholar but followed the Shaiva path. His uncle said to Gadadharadas, “Shri Vallabhacharyaji has arrived. I have some doubts to ask him about, so I’m going to meet him.” Then Gadadharadas said, “I will come with you.” So both of them went.

Then Gadadharadas’s uncle asked Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! There is only one Lord, but why do different Vaishnav traditions worship Him in different forms? Some worship Krishna, some Ram, some Narasimha, some Narayan, and so on. So who truly is the Supreme Lord?”

Then Shri Acharyaji replied, “Just as the emperor has dominion over the entire earth, and yet there are other kings who govern various regions and villages — they are all called kings but are obedient to the emperor. In the same way, Shri Krishna, the Supreme Purna Purushottam, is above all. The various incarnations are partial expansions and serve Him. All should be called ‘Thakur’ (Lord), but they are under the command of Shri Krishna.” Hearing this, Gadadharadas’s uncle remained silent.

Gadadharadas was a divine soul. The Siddhant (spiritual principle) settled in his heart — that by taking refuge in Shri Acharyaji, one can attain Shri Krishna. Then Gadadharadas bowed down to Shri Acharyaji and requested, “Maharaj! Please accept me into your refuge. I have wandered greatly in the world.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “First, ask your uncle. If he feels hurt, then why should you become a sevak?”

Then Gadadharadas's uncle said, "Maharaj! I am only concerned with the Gayatri mantra. I know nothing else. Gadadharadas knows his own path. I will neither say yes nor no." Then Gadadharadas said, "From now on, I am your sevak. I have no worldly dealings with this worldly man. That is why I have come to take your shelter. Please kindly accept me. And as for this outward-facing (bahirmukh) man, when will he say that I should be your sevak?"

Hearing these words of Gadadharadas, his uncle got up and stood outside. Then Shri Acharyaji was very pleased with Gadadharadas and said, "If one has such determination even before becoming a sevak, then upon becoming one, he will be an excellent Vaishnav."

Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji said, "Go and bathe in the Triveni." Then Gadadharadas went to bathe while remaining untouched by others. Then Shri Acharyaji recited the name to him and performed the Brahmasambandh initiation. After that, Gadadharadas requested, "Maharaj! Now what is my duty? Please give your command."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Do Bhagavad seva. Bring a Swaroop (divine image of the Lord)." Then Gadadharadas thought, "There is a Swaroop at my uncle's house. How will I get it? I do not speak to this outward-minded person."

While thinking this, he came outside after wearing tilak and mala. His uncle asked him, "You have become a sevak — that is good — but at least come to my house." Then Gadadharadas said, "If you give me the Thakurji (deity) that is in your house, then I will come." Then he said, "Take Him. I have no use for Thakurji." So Gadadharadas went with his uncle to his house and asked for Shri Thakurji. Then his uncle said, "At least eat and drink first. It is already afternoon. Take Shri Thakurji afterward."

Then Gadadharadas said, "Now I have no food or social dealings with you. Please give me Shri Thakurji. If you no longer want to keep Him, then give Him to me." Then the uncle said, "We are on the Shaiva path. What do I have to do with Thakurji? I consider only Mahadevji as my deity. So take Him quickly."

Shri Thakurji changed the heart of Gadadharadas's uncle in such a way that where the Lord's devotee leaves, the Lord Himself also does not remain. So he gave Thakurji promptly.

Then Shri Acharyaji had the deity bathed with panchamrit and named Him Shrimadanmohanji. He was of golden complexion. Gadadharadas

then stayed with Shri Acharyaji for three days. He learned all the rituals of seva. Shri Acharyaji delivered a discourse on the Bhaktivardhini text. In it, this verse was discussed:

"अव्यावृत्तो भजेत्कृष्णं पूजया श्रवणा द भः। व्यावृत्तोऽ प हरौ चत्तं श्रवणादो यतेत्सदा ।।"

In this, it is said that the primary service should be uninterrupted. And if interrupted, then one must always keep the mind focused on Hari and continue hearing about Him. Hearing this, Gadadharadas resolved that he would not engage in any worldly occupation (vyavritti) at all. Later, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu departed, and Gadadharadas returned to his home in Orchha.

He was not married. His parents had also passed away. His age was around thirty years. His relatives said to him, “Now you also stay at home.” He replied, “I have become a Vaishnav. I have no dealings of food or conduct with any of you.” So he left that household. Gadadharadas began performing seva of Shrimadanmohanji with great love and devotion, dedicating his whole home to the Lord’s service.

Prasang 1 – The Day Gadadharadas Offered Only Water to

Shri Madanmohanji

Gadadharadas showed deep heartfelt devotion to Shri Madanmohanji. Earlier, he would go to the homes of yajmans (patrons) and bring back whatever was needed. After becoming a Vaishnav, he lived in an unbroken state of devotion. He gave up all worldly matters. Whatever came, he would manage with that. His mind remained absorbed in mental seva as its fruit. He remained immersed in the sentiment of “Chetas tat-pravanam seva” — the mind should be inclined toward service. Whatever came through effort or money, he used it in seva. He never hoarded. Whatever he received, he would prepare offerings for Shri Madanmohanji from it. He would distribute Mahaprasad to Vaishnavs. In this way, he lived a renounced life. One day, by the will of God, nothing came from the yajmans’ homes.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason was that Shri Thakurji tested him. To take a vow of uninterrupted seva is relatively easy, but to remain patient when nothing is received is extremely difficult. Hence, nothing came that day. So for Mangala Aarti, he offered only a pot of water. For Shringar and Rajbhog too, only water was offered. Later, at Utthapan until Shayan, only water was offered.

However, he did not take anything on credit.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why? Because that would be a worldly transaction. If one takes on credit, and the person does not give their belongings willingly, then it is not considered seva. Moreover, time is not guaranteed. If one takes on credit and dies before repaying, then the debt remains on their head, and they must take birth again. This is written in the scriptures. However, Gadadharadas was not afraid of time. He had taken refuge in the teachings of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's scriptures, which instruct on uninterrupted devotion. In this way, a prahar and a half (about 4.5 hours) of the night passed while he slept. But his chest burned as if set on fire — "Today, my Thakur has remained hungry."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Even though he offered water with devotional sentiment in mental seva and believed Shri Thakurji accepted it, this feeling arose because he is a sakhi of Radha in the divine play. Her name is Kalkanthi. She belongs to the group of unmarried sakhis and has the shelter of Shri Yamunaji. During the singing of the sakhi group, she sings with full melody. Her voice is very beautiful. Therefore, out of Yamunaji's sentiment, she offered only water for all the bhogs. Thus, all ingredients were offered with sentiment and were complete. But in this sentiment, there was no contentment for the Vaishnav. It did not involve all the senses — offering with the hand and the mental seva of Braj devotees — and Thakurji's own special desire. This is the principle of Pushtimarg: if there is no love in offering with the hand, then even the emotions of Braj devotees vanish. The sentiment becomes one of the path of knowledge.

In the verse "Patram, pushpam, phalam, toyam, yo me bhaktya prayacchati," there is deep meaning. On the path of rules (Maryada), if a devotee offers leaf, flower, fruit, or water, it is accepted regardless of quality. There is no insistence on the item. In the Gita, it says "the devotee offers" — meaning one who is a devotee offers all four items with love and understanding. If one is affectionate, they are called a devotee.

So for leaf — betel leaves, paan, or colocasia leaves — devotees lovingly make patrodas (rolls) and offer them. The knowledgeable do not savor the taste, so they sweeten all the leaves. For flowers — gulab (rose) is dipped in sugar and lovingly offered. For fruit — one tastes the best sweet ones and offers those. A true devotee even tastes it first. Even in the Maryada path, Bhilni Shabari tasted fruits in the forest and offered them to see if they had insects or poison, thinking

— “Let the pain come to me first.” Yet Shri Ramchandraji appreciated this and said, “Fruits such as these were never served even at the wedding in the house of King Dashrath or Janak.” So there was not that level of love there.

A devotee presents with care; a person of knowledge just offers whatever they have. Therefore, Gadadharadas, being a devotee associated with the divine play of Pushtimarg, lovingly offered water. But since he was affectionate, his chest burned — “Today, nothing was offered.”

His heart caught fire with separation — “Today, nothing was offered. Without receiving anything from a Vaishnav, Shri Thakurji remained hungry.” Such deep sentiments exist only in the hearts of certain people. To offer the gift of separation to Thakurji — for that reason, nothing came that day. Thus, the fire of separation burned in his heart. He became the primary eligible recipient. Those who do not feel separation cannot truly experience the fruits of Pushtimarg. In this way, a prahar and a half of the night passed.

Then a yajman came. He called out to Gadadharadas, made him open the door, gave him four rupees and some clothes, and said, “Today was my Shuddha Shraddha (a pure ancestral ritual). Please accept this as your dakshina.” Saying this, he left.

At that time, Gadadharadas’s heart was burning with separation. “Let me quickly prepare something.” With this thought, he took one rupee and immediately went to the market. There he saw a halwai (sweet-maker) making jalebi. He asked him, “Have you sold any of this to anyone yet?” The halwai said, “It’s just being prepared now, not sold yet.” Then he said, “Here is a rupee — quickly weigh and pack some.”

Taking the jalebi, he returned home, bathed, and offered it to Shri Thakurji. Then he laid Thakurji to rest, called the Vaishnavs, and distributed all the Mahaprasad to them. He himself stayed hungry but felt great joy in his heart — that Shri Thakurji had eaten, and the Vaishnavs did not have to go without.

After that, he used the remaining three rupees to bring the necessary ingredients, prepared an offering, fed Shri Thakurji, called the Vaishnavs again, and served them Mahaprasad in proper vessels.

While taking the Mahaprasad, the Vaishnavs said, “Gadadharadas! The Mahaprasad you gave us last night — even though we make the same items — they never taste that good. Please tell us what you did differently.”

Then Gadadharadas said, “Yesterday, I had nothing at home. At night, four rupees came. I bought one rupee worth of jalebi from the market. That’s what I offered.” He told them everything in detail. All the Vaishnavs became very pleased with Gadadharadas.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is that Shri Thakurji and Shri Acharyaji are pleased with him. Therefore, they dwell in the hearts of all Vaishnavs. Shri Krishna, the inspirer of intelligence, ensures that no true-hearted, pure devotee Vaishnav is displeased by anyone. In this way, the Vaishnavs became delighted. Then Gadadharadas sang a kirtan.

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"गो वंद-पद-पल्लव सर पर बराजमान, तनको कहा क ह आवै सुखको प्रमान ।

Govind's lotus feet rest upon the head, What words can describe the measure of that joy?

ब्रज-दनेस देस बसत कालानल हू न त्रसत, बलसत मन हुलसत क र लीला रस पान ।

Living in the land of Braj like the sun in its glory, Even the fire of time does not cause

them fear, Their mind delights and rejoices, drinking the nectar of divine pastimes.

भीजे नत नैन रहत ह र के गुनगान कहत, जानत न ह त्र वधताप भानत न ह आन ।

Their eyes remain ever wet, constantly singing Hari's glories, They know no suffering of

the threefold miseries, they are unaware of anything else.

तनके मुख-कमल दरस पावन पद नु परस, अधम जन “गदाधर” से पावत सन्मान।”

Seeing their lotus face and touching their holy feet, even a lowly person like ‘Gadadhar’

receives honor.

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Even though he considered himself fallen, the deep affection that existed between him, Shri Thakurji, and the Vaishnavs made them inseparable. The Lord and His devotees were lovingly drawn to him. Gadadharadas was an excellent soul devoted entirely to God.

Prasang 2 – The Vegetable Offering

One day, Gadahardas had invited Vaishnavas for Mahaprasad. All the preparations were made, but there was no vegetable (saag). Then Gadahardas said to the Vaishnavas who were seated, “Is there any Vaishnav here who can bring some greens?”

Then Madhodas, the brother of Bainidas—who had kept a courtesan in his house—spoke up and said, “If you say so, I can bring it.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): His intention was this: “I have kept a courtesan; will you accept what I bring?” Then Gadahardas said, “Bring it.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In Gadahardas’s heart, there was no fault-finding. He knew the soul’s relationship with Shri Acharyaji. That’s why he said, “Bring it.” Then Madhodas brought

bathua greens. Gadahardas became pleased and said, “Quickly, prepare the dish.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that when something is brought with love, even the main offering service can be entrusted to that person. This shows that service should be done with love. Whoever it may be, Shri Thakurji will accept it lovingly if done with devotion. Then the entire preparation was completed and offered to Shri Thakurji. When it was time, the offering was removed, and Mahaprasad was distributed to all the Vaishnavas.

All the Vaishnavas, while taking Mahaprasad, praised the vegetable. Then while Gadahardas was serving, Madhodas came near. Gadahardas, pleased, said to Madhodas, “The vegetable you brought was accepted by Shri Thakurji. Therefore, may your devotion to Hari become firm.” This blessing was given.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that the small service of vegetables that Madhodas did with humility was accepted with love by Shri Thakurji. This should be understood as: when a Vaishnav accepts and praises the Mahaprasad, both the services become successful. And there is no one as generous as the Lord—who, by accepting even the smallest service like offering vegetables, destroys the bondage of countless lifetimes and grants devotion to Hari. Such is the Bhagavadiya (beloved of God) Gadahardas.

Prasang 3 – The Merchant and the Bulls

One day, outside the village, a merchant (banjara) came and settled down. He wanted some bulls. He entered the village, where ten to fifteen Brahmins—relatives of Gadahardas—were sitting. They used to mock Gadahardas, saying, “He has become a devotee.”

So the merchant asked those Brahmins, “Where can I buy bulls?” The Brahmins said, “Gadadhar Bhagat has many. Take as many as you want from him. But he won’t give them just like that. Go give him the money. Tell him to bring them from wherever he wants. Then come back the next day. You will get the bulls.”

So the merchant brought 100 rupees and went to Gadahardas. He said, “I want to buy bulls. Please arrange them.” Gadahardas replied, “Baba! Where do I have bulls? Ask in the village—I don’t know anything about this.”

Then the merchant placed 100 rupees before Gadahardas and left,

saying, “I will come tomorrow to take the bulls. The villagers have told me this way.” Then Gadahardas realized, “It seems someone from my caste has tricked him.”

So Gadahardas said, “You won’t see any bulls here tomorrow at midday.” Even then, the merchant, pleased, said, “Fine. Keep the money.” Afterward, Gadahardas used those 100 rupees to gather ingredients. He prepared all the dishes and offered bhog to Shri Thakurji the next day. Later, while serving Mahaprasad to all Vaishnavas at midday, the merchant came.

Then Gadahardas said, “You have come at the right time. All these are Shri Thakurji’s bulls. Among them are calves and young bulls. See and choose whatever you want.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning is: the bulls are symbolic of dharma (righteousness). Gadahardas says, “In today’s times, dharma resides in these Vaishnavas. So if you wish to take dharma, look here.”

Bulls are such that they do only what task they are engaged in. They eat only what is given. They are content. Similarly, these Vaishnavas are like that. Whatever task they are given, they accept it. There is contentment in it.

So the merchant’s ingredients were accepted by Shri Thakurji. Vaishnavas partook of the Mahaprasad. Gadahardas was pleased and said so. Then the merchant realized, “This man is a devotee of God. The villagers made fun of me and tried to cause a conflict. But I am truly fortunate that the Lord accepted me, a sinner, in this form.”

“Now I will take refuge in him. I am fulfilled.” Then he did full prostration (sashtang dandvat) to Gadahardas and said, “I have been wandering day and night in the ocean of worldly life. Now I have come to your refuge. Please deliver me.”

Then Gadahardas said, “I do not offer service. But all these Vaishnavas and I are sevaks of Shri Acharyaji. He resides in Adel. Become his sevak.” Then Gadahardas, recognizing him as a divine soul, gave him Mahaprasad. The merchant went to Adel, received a name from Shri Acharyaji, and became fulfilled.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that even a moment in the company of a Bhagavadiya (beloved of God), if the soul is of a higher nature, can transform one’s life. Gadahardas is such a Bhagavadiya. His heart holds such deep feelings—they cannot be

expressed.

Such is Gadahardasji, a divine beloved of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Therefore, there is no limit to his story—so we will describe only this much.

Varta 9 - Benidas and Madhavdas (Two

Kshatriya brothers)

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevaks, two Kshatriya brothers—Benidas and Madhavdas—who lived in Kada. The sentiment of their story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Beniprasad is the bull that pulls the cart of Vrishbhanuji. He struck Rishabh, the friend of the bull, with his horn. As a result, Rishabh's friend suffered for three days. Due to his curse, he fell to the earth. Madhavdas is the sakhi of Ratanprabha Lalitaji. Thus, both brothers were born on earth by divine will. However, their minds did not match. Madhavdas had kept a courtesan in his house, and all the Vaishnavs criticized him. But that courtesan was a divine Vaishnav. In the lila, she was Chandralata, a sakhi of Chandrawali. Without an extraordinary connection, strong divine love does not take form in a divine soul.

Prasang 1 – Shri Acharyaji Questions Madhavdas

Once, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu arrived in Kada. All the Vaishnavs came for his darshan. Later, Madhavdas heard about it and came too. He bowed before Shri Acharyaji. Then all the Vaishnavs said to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! Madhavdas keeps a courtesan." Shri Acharyaji asked, "Madhavdas, do you keep a courtesan?" Madhavdas replied, "Maharaj, my mind is attached to her. That is why I have kept her." In this manner, Shri Acharyaji asked him three times. Each time, Madhavdas said, "Maharaj, my mind is attached to her. That is why I have kept her." Then Shri Acharyaji remained silent.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is: initially, the Vaishnavs criticized him so that Madhavdas would leave the courtesan, feeling ashamed from their rebuke. They considered him a brother, so there was no jealousy or hatred. If there had been any malice, it would have been an obstacle for all. Later, Shri Acharyaji told the Vaishnavs that if Madhavdas would leave her upon

his instruction, that would be good. Let the worldly criticism of a Vaishnav be the reason for detachment.

Shri Acharyaji knew all kinds of divine play, so he asked, “Madhavdas, do you keep a courtesan?”— He asked this thinking, “If he leaves the courtesan because I told him to, it will become an obstacle to his devotion.” But Madhavdas did not leave her and even justified it: “Madhavdas, you have accepted one as low as a courtesan? You are not afraid of what society thinks?” Madhavdas said, “My mind is attached to her. She has no place elsewhere, so neither social shame nor Vaishnav criticism can make me leave her. I did not choose her. My own mind was the force. It was my mind that became attached and thus kept her.” In this way, he said it three times. This shows that when love is true, the words spoken become firm and truthful. So Madhavdas, with true love, spoke the same answer three times. Shri Acharyaji then became pleased. Such firm-minded Vaishnavs are rare.

Then all the Vaishnavs said to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, “Maharaj! Until now, this matter was not yours. But now he is not even leaving her after you have spoken. Won’t you say anything further?”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows the Vaishnavs were very worried. They thought: “Now that Shri Acharyaji has spoken, what will become of Madhavdas’ salvation?” Out of concern, the Vaishnavs again asked, “Won’t you say something more?” This was the sentiment.

Then Shri Acharyaji consoled the Vaishnavs: “Do not worry. His mind is attached to her, but how many times does it take to turn one’s mind toward Shri Thakurji? Gadadhardas has already given him a blessing: this very Madhavdas will attain firm Hari bhakti.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows: you need not worry. He is not worldly. That courtesan and others like her are to be removed from the world. The firm devotion that Gadadhardas gave him—I also gave it to him. If I forcibly separate them, how would Gadadhardas’ divine grace be understood? Gadadhardas gave him Hari bhakti, so it will become firm. Do not worry.

Then all the Vaishnavs became pleased and remained silent. Later, Madhavdas’ mind changed. He distanced himself from the courtesan and began living according to Vaishnav tradition. He became a good Vaishnav.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows: the separation

from the courtesan meant this—He told her, “You are the sakhi of Shri Gusainji. When Shri Gusainji arrives, your purpose will be fulfilled. Until then, I cannot be with you.” Saying this, he turned her away.

The courtesan then survived by eating dry, oiled flatbread without ghee for fifteen years. Later, when Shri Gusainji came to Kada, the courtesan heard and came to make a request: “Maharaj! Please accept me.” Shri Gusainji said, “I do not serve courtesans.”

So she returned home and lay down, giving up food and water. Shri Gusainji stayed in Kada for eight days. From a distance, she came for darshan. On the ninth day, when Shri Gusainji was about to leave, the courtesan came, holding the hands of two people, and said: “Maharaj! Today is the ninth day. If you do not accept me, I will leave this life without food or water.”

Shri Gusainji realized that her fault had been removed and she had become pure. He then told her his name. Then the courtesan made a request for Brahmasambandh (spiritual initiation): “Maharaj! Madhavdas once told me that I am a maidservant of Shri Gusainji. Because of that connection, I survived for fifteen years eating dry flatbread. Now, since the ninth day, I have given up even water. Please give me your command. I will obey. Though I am a sinner, because of my connection with Madhavdas, I got the darshan of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu and now yours too. Please give me Brahmasambandh and place the service of Bhagavan on my head. Only then will my life continue.”

Then Shri Gusainji, seeing her pure sentiment, gave her Brahmasambandh. He entrusted her with Shri Lalji. He told the Vaishnavs: “Explain all the customs and practices to her so that she may serve properly.”

In this way, the courtesan received a spiritual awakening. Still, the Vaishnavs warned her: “For four days, do not touch water or any impure substance.” But her love was so deep that she could not stay away. She began serving even during the period of restriction. On the fifth day, which was an impure day, she bathed Shri Thakurji with panchamrit. The Vaishnavs then broke all association with her.

Some days later, Shri Gusainji came to Kada. Everyone told him, “Maharaj! That courtesan disobeyed and performed service even during the restriction. She would not listen.” Hearing this, Shri Gusainji called her close and asked, “Why do you pour water in the temple during restriction days?” The courtesan replied, “Maharaj! I

have had countless lovers in this world—equal to the number of hairs on my body. All of them I left behind by your grace.

Now I have only one beloved—beyond this world. How can I live four days without him? You are omniscient. You know what is in my heart. Even for one moment I cannot bear separation. On the fifth day, even during impurity, I bathed Shri Thakurji with panchamrit. I still observe the protocol. You know everything. Please instruct me."

Then Shri Gusainji, seeing that Shri Thakurji was pleased with her, said, "Continue serving as you are." With this, he sent her home, saying, "Go quickly. Shri Thakurji is waiting for you." She bowed down and left.

Later, Shri Gusainji told the Vaishnavs, "Whatever she does, let her do. Do not say anything to her. But let no one imitate her out of imitation. Shri Thakurji is pleased with her in that particular way. He will be pleased with you through adherence to tradition." In this way, the courtesan developed deep love through her connection with Madhavdas.

Prasang 2 – The Moti Mala and the River Incident

Madhavdas lived together with Benidas. One day, a pearl necklace of great value came for sale. Seeing it, Madhavdas said to Benidas, "This necklace is suitable for Shri Navanitpriyaji. So, please take it." Then Benidas said, "What do you mean by 'take'? Whatever belongings we have, everything is of Shri Thakurji only." Saying this, he dismissed the topic.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows how those who are attached to the world claim everything is for Shri Thakurji just for show in front of others, but they do not actually spend anything for Shri Thakurji.

Then Madhavdas said, "If everything is indeed Shri Thakurji's, then why don't we buy the necklace for Him?" Benidas replied, "How can we afford it?" Then Madhavdas said, "Split the wealth with me. I will live separately from you."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This means: You are like a bull, bearing only the burden of household duties. I want to live separately and fulfill my own devotional desires.

So they divided their small amount of wealth in half and separated.

But there was little money, so the necklace could not be purchased. Still, Madhavdas desired that such a necklace should be accepted by Shri Navanitpriyaji. So, he took that money and went south to earn more. The necklace Madhavdas had intended for divine acceptance could not be used in the worldly sense. It came for sale in Prayag. There, Vaishnavs bought it and gave it to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji then adorned Shri Navanitpriyaji with it.

Meanwhile, Madhavdas earned a lot of wealth in the south and returned with a necklace better than the first one. While traveling, he reached a big river. He sat in a boat along with many other people. When the boat reached midstream, Shri Navanitpriyaji Himself arrived, holding a red ball of butter. He gave darshan to Madhavdas and said from His divine mouth, “Shall I sink the boat?”

Madhavdas replied, “Let it happen as You wish (nizechchhatah karishyati).” Then Shri Navanitpriyaji asked, “Where had you gone?” Madhavdas replied, “I had gone to bring the necklace.” Then Shri Navanitpriyaji said, “Don’t I already have necklaces? See, that same necklace is with Shri Acharyaji. I already have many.” Then Madhavdas replied, “Maharaj! You may have many, but it is not the duty of a sevak to sit idle. He must make an effort.” Then the boat was saved from sinking.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Thakurji came on the boat and said, “Because of you I had to go to the south. Why did you go? Don’t I already have necklaces? Shall I sink the boat then? What would you do?” Your devotional desire stayed firm. Then Madhavdas said, “Let it happen as You wish (nizechchhatah karishyati).” Which means: “He will act according to the wish of His own devotees.” The Lord has always fulfilled the desires of His devotees. “Bhaktamanorathapurakaya namah” is His Name—Salutations to the One who fulfills the desires of His devotees.

So the acceptance of the necklace happened through Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. After that, if the boat-like body sinks, I have no concern. When it is Your wish, then let it sink. You already have many necklaces—what need is there for my efforts? But if any of Your desires are fulfilled through my efforts, then the effort bears fruit. Otherwise, even householder life is wasted in vain. So the dharma of a sevak is to always strive to fulfill Your accepted desire.

Then Shri Thakurji prevented the boat from sinking. Otherwise, as Shri Thakurji said He would sink the boat, Madhavdas also affirmed it was the divine will. If the devotee commands it, then it would sink.

But Madhavdas said, “Let it happen as You wish.” This means: if the devotee desires that the necklace be accepted, then let it be so.

Madhavdas had no worry about the boat sinking. But others sitting in the boat, being with the devotee, needed to be saved too. How could Madhavdas let them drown? Thus, the Lord’s speech is deep. Only He understands it. Whom He blesses, understands.

The boat was rocking, and everyone’s mouths had gone dry from fear. The boatman said, “This is no longer in our hands.” At that moment, Madhavdas felt joy in his heart, and the boat was saved from sinking.

Everyone said, “Because this great man is on board, the boat was saved. Otherwise, we all would have drowned.” Later, after reaching the shore, Madhavdas went to meet Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Then Shri Acharyaji asked Madhavdas, “How did the boat not sink?” Madhavdas told Shri Acharyaji the entire incident.

Then Shri Acharyaji told all the Vaishnavs, “Look, this is the same Madhavdas. See what firm resolve he has as a Vaishnav.” From that day, the necklace was called the ‘Madhavdas Necklace’—everyone calls it so.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that just as his divine name in the lila is Ratnaprabha, In the same way, the light of a gem shines through Madhavdas’ story. Such was Madhavdas—truly belonging to the Divine. This story reveals the greatness of the blessings of the Divine. Thus, Madhavdas was such a blessed recipient of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu’s grace, that his story has no limit. We can only describe a little of it.

Varta 10 - Harivansh Pathak, a Saraswat

Brahmin of Kashi

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Harivansh Pathak, a Saraswat Brahmin of Kashi. The sentiment of his story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, his form is Gati Uttalika, the sakhi of Vishakhaji. He completes all the seva and prepares all the required items immediately. Therefore, his manner, his actions, are always quick and eager. That is why Vishakhaji is very pleased with him.

So, Harivansh Pathak was first a worshipper of Ganesh. When Shri Acharyaji performed the "Patravalamban" in Kashi and defeated the learned pandits, then in the mind of Harivansh Pathak arose the thought: "I should go and have darshan of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu." So, he came for darshan. Then, seeing the Brahmin form of Shri Acharyaji, he thought in his mind: "He too is a Brahmin, I too am a Brahmin. He is a pandit, so what use is he for me? If a delay happens in my darshan of Ganesh, then that is not right." Thinking this, he looked from a distance and then turned back.

So, he came home and began to take the items for the worship of Ganesh. At the doorway, he stumbled and fell down, and became unconscious. Then Ganesh appeared in his dream and said to Harivansh Pathak: "You were coming to me without taking darshan of Shri Acharyaji, so I will not see your face. You have committed an offense against Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji is the Supreme Purna Purushottam. Get forgiveness for your offense from him and then come to me."

Then Harivansh Pathak regained consciousness of his body. So, he quickly ran to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, bowed down, and prayed: "Maharaj! You are the Purna Purushottam. I did not know. Now forgive my offense and accept me in your refuge." Then Shri Acharyaji said: "I too am a Brahmin, you too are a Brahmin. Why do you speak of coming to my refuge?"

Then Harivansh Pathak replied: “Maharaj! I am an ignorant being, fallen in the ocean of worldly existence. How can I know your divine form? I am a worshipper of Ganesh, and Ganesh himself is afraid of the offense towards you. Therefore, he has sent me to you to get forgiveness for my offense. Now I know that you are greater than me. Now please accept me in your refuge.”

At that time Shri Acharyaji was staying at Seth Purushottamdas’s house. There the name of Harivansh Pathak was mentioned. Then Harivansh Pathak prayed: “Maharaj! At home I have a wife, one son, and one daughter. Please accept them as well.” Then Shri Acharyaji said: “Bring them in the form of Bhagavat Swaroop. Then, coming to your home, I will have their names submitted and I will install Shri Thakurji for you. You must serve Him only and not serve any other deity.”

Then Harivansh Pathak said: “Maharaj! Once I have obtained Purushottam, then what misfortune would it be if I wander behind other gods?” Saying this, he went into the market, offered some nyochhavar, and brought a small Swaroop of Shri Lalji. He came to Shri Acharyaji and prayed: “Maharaj! Now kindly come quickly. Why? Because the body is not reliable. If suddenly death comes, then the soul will be harmed. Seeing this eagerness, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu became pleased and came to the home of Harivansh Pathak. All arrangements were completed. The whole family’s names were submitted, Shri Thakurji was given a bath with Panchamrit, and placed on the seat. Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji himself cooked, offered bhog, and then ate. All partook of the remnants. Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji went to Seth Purushottamdas’s home.

Later, he set out on the circumambulation of the earth. Then he said to Harivansh Pathak: “If any doubt arises, ask Seth Purushottamdas.” So, Harivansh Pathak performed seva very carefully, and began to feel affection from Shri Thakurji.

Prasang 1 – Harivansh Pathak’s Journey to Patna

Once, Harivansh Pathak had gone to Patna for household work. He had much closeness with the hakim (ruler) of Patna. That hakim thought in his mind: “If he asks me for something, I will give it to him.” One day, that hakim said: “I am very pleased with you, therefore ask whatever you want and I will give it.” Then Harivansh Pathak said: “If sometime a need arises, I will ask.”

In this way, time passed and the day of the Dol festival came near.

Then Shri Thakurji indicated to Harivansh Pathak: “Will you not swing me on Dol?” Harivansh Pathak thought in his mind: “What should I do now? Few days are left. If I go, I will not reach in time.” So, he went to the hakim and said: “I want something, you must give it to me.” Then the hakim said: “Ask whatever you want.” Then Harivansh said: “I must reach Kashi in 3 days.” Then that hakim gave him horses and men with him. At each stage, they rode on fresh horses, while the tired horses and men returned. In this way, on the second day itself, he reached. At night, all the preparations for Dol were completed, and the next day the swinging was done, giving great joy.

Afterwards, staying for ten or fifteen days, he returned to Patna. Then the hakim asked Harivansh Pathak: “What important work was at your home, that you asked this? If you had asked for wealth, I would have gladly given you a lakh of rupees.” Then Harivansh Pathak said: “I am a householder. There are many duties at home. That was why I went.” In this way, he kept his dharma secret. He was such a devotee of God. After that, all big and small festivals he performed at his home.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here the principle is shown, that if one has affection, then one should celebrate festivals with one’s own Thakur. Then Thakur remains pleased. And the type of seva of Shri Thakurji should not be told to anyone else, just as Harivansh Pathak did not tell anything to that hakim. Even though there were Vaishnavs in his house, still he did not tell them about the experiences of Shri Thakurji.

Thus, Harivansh Pathak was such a recipient of the grace of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Therefore, the limits of his story cannot be told—they go beyond.

Varta 11 - Govinddas Bhalla, a Kshatriya of Thaneshwar

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Govinddas Bhalla, a Kshatriya, residing in Thaneshwar. The sentiment of his story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Govinddas used to serve as a soldier in Thaneshwar, carrying weapons. He stayed near the hakim of Thaneshwar. He used to receive five to seven rupees daily. Once, Shri Acharyaji arrived in Thaneshwar. Then many souls in Thaneshwar came into refuge. Then Govinddas Bhalla prayed to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, saying, "Maharaj! I have a lot of wealth, what should I do with it?" Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Do Bhagavad seva." Then Govinddas Bhalla said, "Maharaj! My wife is not favorable. Her intention is not towards Bhagavan but towards the goddess." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Renounce your wife." Then Govinddas renounced his wife and brought all his wealth, and prayed to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, "Maharaj! What should I do with this wealth? My wife I have already renounced." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Divide this wealth into four parts. One part is offered to Shrinathji. One part is given to your wife, so that when she is left after marriage there will be no fault upon you. Two parts to keep with you for Bhagavad seva." Then Govinddas Bhalla said, "Maharaj! Please accept some parts as well." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Very well, give one part to me." Then Govinddas divided his wealth into four parts. One part he offered to Shrinathji. One part he offered to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. One part he gave to his wife. One part of the wealth he kept and came to Mahavan. There, his wife was socially restricted in the village. So he came to Mahavan and began seva of Shri Mathuranathji.

Prasang 1 – Govinddas in Mahavan

Govinddas in Mahavan daily prepared offerings worth twenty-four taka, and offered bhog. He gave it to Vaishnavs of the maryada-marg.

Whatever was left, he fed the cows. He himself took nothing from it. Separately, he would prepare a little, offer bhog, and eat that.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is that in Mahavan there was a temple of Nandarai. The worship was entrusted to Brahmins. They performed it according to maryada (scriptural rules). The expenses were given by Nandarai. So the Thakur was there, and Brahmins did the worship. How could he himself take from that temple? Therefore, separately he would prepare a little and, in his mind, offer the bhog and then eat.

In this way, all the wealth was spent. Then he came to Shrinathji's temple and began doing service of Shri Govardhan-dhar. He cleaned the utensils at both times of the day. At midnight, one and a half prahar later, he would wake, finish bodily duties, bathe, and with a pitcher go to Mathura. He filled a pitcher of Yamuna water and brought it before Rajbhog. He washed all the utensils, plastered the kitchen with cow dung, completed all services, came down from the mountain, washed his tilak, removed his mala, tied it in a knot, and went around Govardhan begging for alms. That brought him food equal to five or seven seers. When that food was brought, he ground flour with his own hands, prepared rotis, showed them to the flag of Shri Govardhan-dhar, and partook of it mixed with charanamrit. Afterwards he washed the utensils of the afternoon bhog, plastered the kitchen, and performed the service of shayan. In this way he performed seva. But Shri Govardhan-nathji was not pleased with him.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for this is that if such seva is done with love and affection, then Shri Govardhan-dhar becomes pleased and follows after the sevak. But Govinddas Bhalla was of tamasic nature, so he did everything with pride. His renunciation of wife too was done with pride. In Mahavan also, the daily twenty-four taka worth of offerings he made were done with pride. Here too, all seva was done with pride. He gave much pain to his body. But he lowered all other sevaks, thinking, "Who else will do equal to me?" Therefore, Shri Govardhan-dhar was not pleased with him.

Then Shri Govardhan-dhar spoke to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu in Aadel, saying: "Your sevak troubles me greatly."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that if much seva is done with pride, it troubles me and displeases me. And the words "Your sevak" show this: "If it were any other, I would punish him. But since he is your sevak, you yourself explain to him."

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, from Aadel, came to Agra and asked all the Vaishnavs: “Why is Shri Thakurji displeased?”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for asking all was this—that you already know it was because of Govinddas Bhalla. But by asking everyone, it shows that if anyone does seva with pride, then Shri Thakurji will become displeased.

Then all the Vaishnavs said: “Maharaj! We know nothing. Why should we be proud? Nothing comes from us.” Then Shri Acharyaji became pleased and from Agra went to Mathura. There too, all said: “Maharaj! We know nothing.” Then from there too Shri Acharyaji became pleased and came to Shrinathji’s temple.

Then, after bathing, he entered the temple. He stroked both cheeks of Shri Govardhan-dhar and asked: “Baba! Why are you unhappy?” Then Shri Govardhan-dhar said: “Your sevak troubles me greatly!” Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu called all the sevaks, asked about seva, care, and Mahaprasad. He instructed all of them: “Do not be proud.” Then he asked Govinddas. He replied. Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said: “All the sevaks take Mahaprasad from Shrinathji’s kitchen. You too do the same.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows—follow the way of all the sevaks. Abandon pride. And the Lord is beyond all suffering. If seva is done with pride and pain, it is not pleasing to the Lord.

Then Govinddas said: “Maharaj! How can I take the portion of Deva-ans?”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): By this he meant: “All take the portion of Deva-ans, how can I take it?”

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said: “Take Mahaprasad in our kitchen.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning is: “If you remain in our kitchen,” this shows: leave the seva of Shri Govardhan-dhar and do ours. Stay here. Go along with all the sevaks, then life will go well. If not, then remain with us and take Mahaprasad.”

Then again, with pride, Govinddas said: “How can I take Deva-ans, Guru-ans?” Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said: “Then give up seva.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that when

he was proud at Shrinathji's temple, then seva was easily lost. So seva was left, but he did not obey. Therefore, Shri Gokulnathji said: "The proud Kshatriya has left seva." The meaning is—Shri Gokulnathji does not like pride. For the tamasic, the destination is downfall. Because pride is opposed to the feeling of servitude. Therefore, he is called the proud Kshatriya. The meaning is—there were many Kshatriya sevaks, but they abandoned the pride of Kshatriyahood. But he was not called a Vaishnav, but a proud Kshatriya. That Kshatriyahood, when made into servitude, is not lost, because the Guru is before you. Therefore, it is shown that the pride of high birth is an obstacle. For one day, because of pride, seva is lost. Seva is done by Thakur Himself. This principle is shown.

Therefore, in the Shikshapatra it is written:

असाधनः साधनो वा न साधुः साधुरेव वा। शरणादेव न खलं फलं प्राप्नोत्यसंशयः ॥

"Asadhanaḥ sadhano vā na sādhuḥ sādhureva vā Sharaṇādeva nikhilaṁ phalaṁ prāpnotyasaṁśayaḥ"

In this path there are many asadhans, which do not form Bhagavad dharma. There are many sadhans, such as seva, remembrance, japa, and recitation. Among them, some are sadhus who are sattvik, and some are asadhus, rajasic or tamasic. But those who are firm in refuge day and night in the Lord—such alone surely attain Him. This is shown.

Prasang 2 – Govinddas Leaves Seva and Kesorayji Incident

Then the proud Kshatriya left seva and afterwards came to Mathura. But he could not remain without seva and worship, for he was divine in nature. Then he took Kesorayji's seva on contract. But he did it wrongly.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is, earlier in Mahavan, when he left Mathuranathji's seva and did Shri Govardhan-dhar's seva, that was proper. But when he left Shri Govardhan-nathji's seva and again went into maryada-marg, that became opposite, therefore it is said so.

Later, one day Govinddas had Kesorayji's bed woven. He fed sweets to the weavers and had it made. It became very beautiful. And the hakim of Mathura also had a cot woven. Then someone said, "Kesorayji's bed is not like this one." Hearing this, Hakim came to Kesorayji's temple.

At that time, in the outer room, Kesorayji's bed was placed. He climbed up and sat on it. Then someone said to Govinddas Bhalla: "The hakim of Mathura has come and sat on Shri Thakurji's bed." Then Govinddas, taking a staff, came and struck the hakim there itself. Then the hakim's men attacked Govinddas and committed violence against him.

This news was heard by the Vaishnavs of Mathura. They performed the cremation of Govinddas's body.

Later, one Vaishnav asked Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! How did such a Vaishnav meet this kind of fate?" Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said: "In the afterlife he suffered no harm. But because he did not obey my command, therefore this happened. In his previous birth he was a buffalo in Nandarai's house. Shri Thakurji used to climb upon him. One day he struck Shri Thakurji with his tail. That was the offense, and so he was punished. And when Shri Thakurji's temple was built at Shri Nandarai's house, he carried much water and earth upon his back."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows—there also he bore burden, and here too he bore burden. But he did not do seva with love, therefore the work did not bear fruit as per the earlier right.

And Govinddas in the Saraswat kalpa used to stay at Nandarai's place, carrying weapons. He gave them to Krishna to use against Kans. In the divine play, his name was "Mansukha" Gopa. When Shri Thakurji looted the washermen's clothes and beat them, then Mansukha, who kept Kans's money and coins, was looted, and on the way he beat many. Ten or fifteen were left half-dead. That enmity continued to him.

Later came the Shvetbarah Kalpa. In it, he became a buffalo in Shri Nandarai's house. That was five thousand years ago. There, he struck Shri Thakurji with his tail. That offense was carried forward.

So, the hakim of Mathura was a mleccha. He used to collect Kans's taxes. Govinddas struck him, because earlier he had taken much money from Nandarai. And now he sat on Shri Thakurji's bed. Therefore, he was fit to be struck, and so he struck him. And as earlier he had left many half-dead, so those ten or fifteen, along with others, killed Govinddas. Thus, all his old enmities were settled. Afterwards, he was again born as a gopa at Nandarai's house.

In this way, it is shown that past enmity continues as enmity, and past love continues as love. Thus, Govinddas Bhalla was such a Bhagavadiya. In his story, this principle is shown: that one should not have pride, nor act in stubbornness and disobey the Guru's command. And that one should not leave Pushtimarg's seva of Shri Thakurji and perform maryada-marg seva of Shri Thakurji.

So, that Govinddas was such a recipient of grace of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Therefore, how far can one speak of his story?

Varta 12 - Amma Kshatrani

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's female sevak, Amma Kshatrani, lived in Kada. The sentiment of her story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, she was Rohini. Therefore, she stayed with Shri Nandaraya. Later, she went to Mathura. But her heart remained in Braj. For this reason, after receiving a connection with Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, she was accepted into the Braj Lila. Hence, her feeling of being a mother is firm. Amma Kshatrani lived in Kada, and she had a large family. Amma had two sons—one was two years old, and the other was four years old. At that time, Amma's husband, mother-in-law, father-in-law, mother, and father—all passed away. Only Amma and her two sons remained. Gadadhardas also lived in Kada. There Shri Acharyaji came.

One night, Shri Thakurji gave Amma a dream: "In the morning, you must go to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's refuge. I am with Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. So come to me and perform my seva." Then Amma awoke from her sleep. She became greatly restless in separation. "When will the morning come? When will I go to the refuge of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu?"

When the morning came, she bathed and came to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, bowing down. She said, "Maharaj! Please accept me into your refuge. And you have Shri Balakrishnaji with you. By your grace, at night, he gave me this command in this very manner." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, seeing Amma's pure devotion, made her perform the name dedication.

At that time, a Brahmin had come from the south. With him was a small Shri Lalji. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu gave that Lalji to her, and then went to Badrikashram, where he performed penance for some days and left his body. That Thakurji was placed upon Amma's head. Shri Acharyaji instructed, "His name is Shri Balakrishnaji. With the feeling of motherhood, serve him with the love of a son." In this way, he showered grace upon her.

Amma's two sons were named as Shri Thakurji's intimate friends. The elder was "Arjun," and the younger was "Bhoj." Their names were dedicated, and Amma was instructed: "Do not give your two sons food

from anyone's hands. Give them only Shri Thakurji's Mahaprasad. They are connected with this divine play. If they eat without Mahaprasad, they will face obstacles."

In this way, Shri Acharyaji accepted Amma and then went to Kashi. There he accepted sannyas and performed the lila of removing demonic illusion.

Prasang 1 – Amma Kshatrani's Service in the Mood of a

Mother

Amma Kshatrani served with love in the feeling of motherhood. Her two sons also called her "Amma." Shri Thakurji himself, out of affection, also called her "Amma."

In this way, Shri Thakurji played with both of her sons. They would rub bricks and apply the powder on one another, and scatter it around. Seeing this, Amma became very happy in her heart. But, in her maternal love, she would forbid them: "What kind of play is this? It might fall into someone's eyes."

After some days, one of Amma's sons—the elder one—passed away. Then Amma went to Shri Thakurji and sat crying. Many women also wept with her. Seeing Amma cry, Shri Thakurji said, "Amma, do not weep." He forbade her in this way, consoling her. But Amma did not stop weeping.

After some time, Amma's other son—the younger one—also passed away. Amma began to weep deeply. Then Shri Thakurji again forbade her, saying, "Amma, do not weep." But she did not stop crying. Then Shri Thakurji, while in Adel, said to Shri Gusainji: "Amma is weeping, and I am feeling very sad. So, you go and console her."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): These two sons left their bodies because if they had grown up, they would have become involved in worldly duties. Amma's mind would then have become attached to their marriages and other affairs. But these two were Shri Thakurji's intimate friends, so they were quickly called back.

Why then did Amma weep, being devoted to the Lord? The meaning is this: ordinary people weep due to attachment to their sons. That was not Amma's case. Rather, Shri Thakurji played with both of her sons—

rubbing brick powder, applying it on one another, scattering it. Amma used to witness many such kinds of play. That joy of watching the play was gone. Her two sons were Shri Thakurji's playmates. Now, with whom would he play? This was the feeling with which Amma wept. Therefore, Shri Thakurji, being pleased with Amma, forbade her. He could not bear Amma's sorrow. And if Amma had served with attachment in the ordinary sense of motherly affection, Shri Thakurji would not have spoken.

Then Shri Gusainji, coming from Adel to Kada, went to Amma's house and said to her: "Do not weep. Shri Thakurji feels sorrow."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): By saying this, Shri Gusainji revealed the true form of Amma's sons—that they were Shri Thakurji's intimate friends. If they had grown older, they would not have remained fit for the divine play. Therefore, do not weep. Then Amma stopped weeping.

Amma's love was such that when she lifted Shri Thakurji, she would apply pure fragrant attar with both hands and touch it to his body, saying: "My hands are rough, and this tender child has delicate limbs." In this way, she performed all seva with loving care.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This fragrant attar was the true symbol of the love of Shri Swaminiji. This shows that Amma served with the feelings of Yashoda and Rohini, like the devotees of Braj. Therefore, Shri Thakurji remained very pleased with Amma.

Prasang 2 – Amma Kshatrani and the Bowl of Milk

Once, a bowl filled with milk was placed before Shri Thakurji. After setting it down, Amma closed the door and came outside. At that time, Shri Gusainji came to Amma's house. Then Amma asked him, "Baba, what is the proper time for Shri Thakurji?" Amma herself replied, "Baba, please come inside. For you, it is always the right time."

Then Shri Gusainji slid the door and went inside. There, he saw Shri Thakurji holding the bowl in his hands, drinking the milk. Seeing this, Shri Gusainji closed the door and returned back the same way.

Then Amma asked, "Baba, why did you return again?" Shri Gusainji replied, "Shri Thakurji himself is drinking the milk." Amma then said, "But he is just a child! Do you not know that?"

Then Shri Gusainji said, “Please send this milk to our dera (residence).” Amma replied, “You are the one who makes him drink. Whether you make him drink here or there, it is all the same.”

Hearing these words of affection from Amma, Shri Gusainji became very pleased and went to his dera. Afterwards, Amma too brought milk and made Shri Gusainji drink it.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for this is that Amma was the form of Rohiniji. Shri Balakrishnaji belongs to Rohiniji’s feelings. That is why, when Shri Balakrishnaji was drinking the milk, Shri Gusainji returned back. The meaning is this: Shri Navneetpriyaji is the Thakur of Shri Gusainji. If it had been him, then Shri Gusainji would have made him drink.

But Rohiniji has great affection for Shri Chandravali also. Rohiniji understands the bhava of Chandravali. That is why Shri Gusainji, being pleased, said, “Send us this prasadi milk.” In this way, he pointed towards a past lila.

Then Amma said, “Whether you make him drink here or there, it is the same.” The reason for this is: “You are the one who makes him drink. You are the caretaker of Thakurji. This Thakur belongs to you.” Later, after Amma left her body, Shri Gusainji placed her at the feet of Shri Navneetpriyaji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why so? Because the feeling of Shri Gusainji matched with Rohiniji. Rohiniji is also the one who attains perfection in the lila. Therefore, Amma was the most blessed and divine soul. That is why her story is told in such detail.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This varta reveals the principle that Shri Thakurji cannot bear the suffering of his devotees. Therefore, if worldly or scriptural sorrows come, a Vaishnav should remain patient and not feel distressed. And if he must feel sorrow, then let it only be in relation to Shri Thakurji.

Varta 13 - Gajjan Dhavan Kshatri

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Gajjan Dhavan Kshatri, lived in Agra. The sentiment of his story is described here.

Prasang 1 – Shri Navneetpriyaji Placed on Gajjan's Forehead

On Gajjan's forehead, Shri Acharyaji placed Shri Navneetpriyaji. This will also be described in the varta of a certain Kshatrani.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine lila, Gajjan was a sakhi of Shri Chandravali. Her name was Subhanana. She appeared on the second day after Shri Thakurji manifested, on Dashami. Therefore, Subhanana played many childhood games with Shri Thakurji. She revealed to Shri Chandravali the meanings and secrets of all the games. Because of this, she was very dear to Shri Chandravali. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji placed Shri Navneetpriyaji on the forehead of Gajjan. These Navneetpriyaji are the Thakur of Shri Gusainji. Gajjan is the sakhi of Shri Gusainji; they always played together. That relationship will now be played again.

After some time, Shri Navneetpriyaji began to show affection and closeness towards Gajjan. Gajjan would make cows and horses for him, and he himself would climb on top. Because of this, the skin on Gajjan's thighs became rubbed raw. Yet he had no awareness of his body. One day, Gajjan said to Shri Navneetpriyaji: "Install me at Shri Acharyaji's place, so that you may also stay there."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for this is that Gajjan's love had increased so much that he forgot the proper way of seva. He became careless in play and other matters. Then Shri Thakurji considered, "His state of devotion has already reached its perfection. If he remains in his home village, it will become an obstacle."

Therefore, Gajjan immediately brought Shri Navneetpriyaji and installed him in Gokul. Bowing down to Shri Acharyaji, he said: "Maharaj! Shri Navneetpriyaji has come to your house." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said: "There is no separate bed prepared, nor is any bedding ready. How then has he suddenly arrived?"

Then Gajjan replied: “Now, this is Shri Navneetpriyaji’s wish.” Then Shri Acharyaji took whatever things were already available, prepared them properly, and made him drink, and applied pure fragrance (sodho) to his body, and kept him close, lying beside him.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for applying sodho (fragrant attar) is this: perfumes like attar are the symbolic form of fragrance-love for the divine body of Shri Swaminiji. This was not spoken openly, but by this act it was indicated that Shri Swaminiji’s form was lying beside him.

Afterwards, in order to maintain propriety, a small cot was made. The next day, Shri Navneetpriyaji was placed upon it. Then Shri Navneetpriyaji said: “This bed is small. My feet are hanging down. Therefore, I will lie with you.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown: “Why do you consider me a child in your bhava? In your house, I am in youthful form. And in the bhava of Yashodaji, I am a child. So why did you make a small bed, seeing me as a little child? Therefore, I will lie near you. This is what pleases me.”

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu again applied sodho fragrance to his divine body and lay him close by. Afterwards, in the morning, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu arranged a larger bed, and placed Shri Navneetpriyaji upon it. Then again Shri Navneetpriyaji said to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu: “I will lie near you.”

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu himself said: “Maharaj! One must maintain propriety among people. So, near your place I will keep a proper cot and bedding and, in the form of Shri Swaminiji, I will remain near you.” Thus said Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu himself.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that if one abandons propriety, it may cause the downfall of other souls. Others may imitate what they see. Then Shri Navneetpriyaji began to lie upon the bed.

Prasang 2 – Gajjan Sent to Bring Betel Leaves

Gajjan used to sit at the temple gate during the time of seva. Even at other times, he remained in the temple, never staying apart from Shri Navneetpriyaji, always playing with him. One day, there were no betel leaves. So, Shri Akkaji said to Gajjan: “Take this money and go bring betel leaves.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Gajjan could not say to Akkaji that “Shri Navneetpriyaji is moving with me.” This principle is shown here: even though Shri Thakurji speaks with the Vaishnav and keeps him close, if Guru gives a command, then placing that command upon one’s head and going to perform Guru’s work is dharma, and Shri Thakurji will be pleased. Therefore, Gajjan went. However, Shri Navneetpriyaji did not stop him either—this was to reveal the feeling of a Vaishnav.

Then Gajjan went to fetch betel leaves. But as soon as he stepped outside, such a fever of separation came upon him that he fell at a shop.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is that he had reached the state of vyasana (complete absorption). Therefore, with Shri Acharyaji and such other divine souls who are immersed in bhava, speaking and meeting causes all bodily relations to fall away.

Meanwhile, Shri Acharyaji offered the Rajbhog to Shri Navneetpriyaji. Then Shri Navneetpriyaji said: “I will eat only when Gajjan comes.” Then Shri Acharyaji asked everyone: “Where has Gajjan gone?” Then Shri Akkaji said: “I sent him to bring betel leaves.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said: “Why did you send Gajjan? Shri Navneetpriyaji moves with him. From today, do not say anything to him, do not send him anywhere.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is revealed that he had attained the fruit-stage. His inner realization was already accomplished.

Then Shri Akkaji said: “From now on, I will not tell him to do any service.” Then Shri Acharyaji said to another Vaishnav: “Go quickly and bring Gajjan back. He has fallen at a shop. You bring the betel leaves.”

Then the Vaishnav went and saw that indeed, near the gate, at a shop, Gajjan had fallen. Then he said: “Quickly come! Shri Acharyaji has called you.” Hearing this, immediately Gajjan’s fever of separation left him. He ran and came quickly. Then he said to Shri Navneetpriyaji: “Baba! Why are you not eating?”

Then Shri Navneetpriyaji said: “Now that you have come, I will eat.” Such was the love between Gajjan and Shri Navneetpriyaji. Gajjan was such a divine soul. Therefore, there is no limit to his story—it can only be told so far.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this varta it is shown that the state of vyasana (complete absorption) is supreme, in which Shri Thakurji himself resides. As Kumbhandasji has sung: “When mutual separation overwhelms, nothing else remains in the heart.” In this way, the mutual love of Gajjan was revealed.

Varta 14 - Narayandas Brahmachari

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Narayandas Brahmachari, a Saraswat Brahmin who lived in Mahavan. The sentiment of his story is described here:

Prasang 1 – Shri Gokulchandramaji Rests on Narayandas'

Head

Once, Shri Gokulchandramaji was placed upon the head of Narayandas Brahmachari. This will be further mentioned in the story of a certain Kshatrani, where four divine forms were placed upon the heads of four different Vaishnavs.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine lila, Narayandas is one of the sixteen thousand fire-born maidens (Agni Kumarikas). Among them, he is the main companion of Radha. His name is Madhurekshana—the one whose gaze (ikshan) is sweet (madhur). By beholding the beauty of Shri Thakurji's face, he would forget all bodily awareness. Such was his attachment to the divine form (svarupasakti). He constantly meditated upon the divine form throughout all eight periods of the day.

Narayandas served Shri Gokulchandramaji very devotedly. He would wash the grass and feed it to the cows so that not even a speck of dust would mix into the milk. Shri Thakurji is extremely delicate.

Bhav Prakash: This shows that he was cautious even about the suspicion of dust in milk. He maintained great purity in vegetables, water, and all ingredients—so that the Lord would not be troubled by anything.

Narayandas lived the life of renunciation. He would take alms properly. He accepted food from untouched hands, in separate portions, and would survive only on food that came to his door unasked. Wherever he would take soil to wash his feet, he would see money there. He would throw soil over the money and walk away. He never touched money.

One night, a great amount of money was scattered around his cot. In the morning, seeing it, he said to his niece, “There is impurity in the house. Sweep it out.” So the niece swept it up and threw it outside. Then she smeared cow-dung paste all over the area.

Bhav Prakash: This shows that Narayandas had upheld celibacy since childhood. He had tried many ways to earn wealth but was never successful. At the age of forty, he became a sevak of Shri Acharyaji. Then he gained knowledge of Shri Thakurji’s divine form. And he also realized the true nature of wealth. He then called money “the excrement of fire.” From that point, wherever he saw money, he would consider it like filth and throw soil over it. Riddhi and Siddhi (wealth and supernatural powers) would appear before him to test him. He began seeing money wherever he went, But he would consider it filth and cover it with soil—thinking that if others touch this money-form of illusion, it will spoil them. So he would cover it with soil. When he saw money spread in the house, he told his niece, “There is filth here.” But he did not touch or sweep it himself. That niece too was a sevika of Shri Acharyaji and recipient of his grace. She knew the true form of Narayandas.

Narayandas is the sakhi Madhurekshana, a companion of Radha in the divine lila. His niece’s name was Chatura, who was his sakhi in the lila too. She was very dear to Narayandas because she was very skilled in preparing offerings. She was a young widow and therefore stayed with Narayandas. Her name in the lila was also Chatura.

When Chatura heard Narayandas call the money “filth,” She swept it and threw it out. Though Narayandas had asked her only to sweep, She understood that since Narayandas called it filth, the place also needed to be purified. She smeared the floor accordingly.

Seeing such wisdom in the niece, Shri Thakurji was very pleased with her. In this way, both Narayandas and Chatura served Shri Gokulchandramaji.

Prasang 2 – The Cloud Will Shower on Shri Raghunathji

One day, Narayandas bathed and went to the temple. After offering the Mangala-bhog to Shri Thakurji, he dressed Him. Seeing the beauty of Shri Thakurji’s moon-like face, he became stunned and kept gazing for a long time. Then he asked, “Maharaj! Where will this cloud shower?” Then Shri Thakurji, being pleased, said, “It will shower upon

Shri Raghunathji." Then Narayandas became very happy.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for this is that the manifestation of Shri Raghunathji is of Radha's sakhi. In Dandakaranya, Shri Raghunathji had given a boon that their desire would be fulfilled in Braj. That is why even Shri Gusainji took the name Raghunathji— Because one who delights greatly, pleases everyone's mind, is called Ram. Hence, Shri Raghunathji too is the supremely beautiful form of Radha's sakhi. In the same way, Shri Gokulchandramaji is beautiful, and Narayandas is the sakhi of Radha's sakhi. Therefore, hearing that the cloud will shower upon Shri Raghunathji, he became very pleased, Knowing that his master will always remain connected.

Prasang 3 – Shri Thakurji's Acceptance Through a Vaishnav

One day, Narayandas offered the Rajbhog to Shri Thakurji and came outside to sit. Then his heart became overwhelmed. He asked his niece, "In what manner will Shri Thakurji surely accept (the offering)?" He began thinking about this. Then the niece said, "Is this what you are thinking? Ordinary sevaks of Shri Acharyaji offer bhog through his method, and it is accepted. You are a recipient of Shri Acharyaji's grace. So, in your case, it will definitely be accepted."

Then Narayandas said, "Daughter, listen—Know that Shri Thakurji has truly accepted when suddenly a Vaishnav comes and takes Mahaprasad. Then understand that He has truly accepted."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows: the bhog that is offered will definitely be accepted. But the suddenness refers to this: If a Vaishnav has been invited, then more items are prepared with devotion toward that Vaishnav. Then Shri Thakurji accepts according to the Vaishnav's sentiment. But if no invitation was given, and a Vaishnav comes unexpectedly and receives whatever is available at home, then know that portion was taken from one's own share and given to the Vaishnav. Shri Thakurji gives Mahaprasad to all.

This expresses love toward Vaishnavs—When an unexpected Vaishnav arrives, love for the Vaishnav is shown. Even if one remains hungry, considering it the Vaishnav's good fortune, they are served. Then know that Shri Thakurji has accepted.

That is why it is said in Shikshapatra: "Tadiyāś cet svataḥ tuṣṭāḥ, tuṣṭaḥ kṛṣṇo na saṁśayaḥ" If those belonging to Him are pleased by

your own will, then Krishna is pleased—no doubt about it. If “His own” are satisfied in this way, then Shri Thakurji is surely pleased. This shows that Narayandas had an indescribable love even for Vaishnavs in his heart.

Prasang 4 – Narayandas Offers Hot Kheer and Shri Thakurji

Responds

One time, Narayandas adorned Shri Gokulchandramaji and prepared the shringar-bhog of kheer. He placed it on the platter and offered it. Just then, a Vaishnav gave Narayandas the news that Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu had arrived in Shri Gokul. Hearing this, Narayandas quickly filled the platter with hot kheer, offered it to Shri Gokulchandramaji, and left for darshan of Shri Acharyaji in Shri Gokul. But Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was actually heading toward Mahavan. So they met on the way. Narayandas bowed down. Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said from his lotus mouth, “Narayandas! What time is it for Shri Thakurji?” Narayandas humbly replied, “Maharaj! I have offered the shringar-bhog and am now coming for your darshan.” Shri Acharyaji hastened his pace. He immediately bathed and entered the temple, carrying the jar (jhari).

Then he saw that Shri Gokulchandramaji was shaking His hand. His hand was filled with kheer. On the throne and garments, splashes of kheer had scattered. Then Shri Acharyaji asked Shri Gokulchandramaji, “Baba! Why are you shaking your hand?” Shri Gokulchandramaji replied, “Narayandas offered hot kheer and left. So I lifted it with my hand. It was hot, so I shook my hand and licked my fingers. My lips and hands got burned. That’s why the splashes of kheer are scattered all around the temple.” Then Shri Acharyaji looked at His hand and lips—both were deeply reddened. He then cooled the kheer with a fan, completed the bhog offering, and came outside. Then, annoyed, he said to Narayandas, “Why did you offer hot kheer to Shri Thakurji?” Narayandas replied, “Maharaj! Hearing the news about you, I became eager and in that hurry, offered the kheer.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “From now on, never do such a thing again.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning here is: Narayandas, upon hearing the news of Shri Acharyaji, was overcome with emotion. He thought: “If the kheer is hot, Shri Thakurji will blow on it and accept.” But delaying darshan of Shri Acharyaji was not proper dharma in his view. With that sentiment, he went.

Then Shri Gokulchandramaji held Narayandas' hand to show that He had still accepted the offering— But also revealed through His entire hand shaking in kheer that the hot offering was inappropriate. Thus, it is shown that offering or adorning the deity in a hurry may cause offense.

Narayandas had the divine desire to visit Shri Acharyaji, but even so, his service caused discomfort to Shri Thakurji. This shows that even in worldly or Vedic matters, if haste is shown, it results in serious fault.

Therefore, when doing seva, the mind must be steady. Or, the appearance of the kheer may be the form of Shri Swaminiji's bhav (sentiment), and the shringar-bhog too carries her bhav. That's why, seeing the kheer, Shri Thakurji lovingly first dipped His hand into it. He then licked His fingers, enjoyed it, and only then accepted the bhog. This reveals the divine principle.

Later, when the time came, Shri Acharyaji performed achaman (ritual sipping), wiped His mouth, accepted the paan, and completed the offering. Then Shri Gokulchandramaji held both of Shri Acharyaji's hands and said, "Please accept this kheer as Mahaprasad." Shri Acharyaji said, "Maharaj! Social and family customs are strict; therefore, we must maintain proper conduct." Then Shri Gokulchandramaji said, "It is My command—so you must accept." Then Shri Acharyaji accepted the kheer as Mahaprasad. From that day on, kheer has been included in the anasakhadi (non-festival daily offerings).

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This is why Shri Gokulchandramaji said, "In the case of such kheer, do not apply family customs to My devotees." So he accepted it.

From that day, kheer was included in the anasakhadi offerings. The reason is: in anasakhadi, Shri Thakurji accepts all bhog. But in festive offerings, kheer is not included—it is only in the daily bhog. The reason is: If included in festival offerings, Vaishnavs will reserve it only for special occasions. But kheer is always dear. There is no need to wait for a particular season or festival. Make it whenever it is pleasing.

Prasang 5 – Narayandas' Final Wish

In this way, Narayandas performed much seva. Later, his body grew

tired. One day, Shri Thakurji said to Narayandas, “Ask for something.” Then Narayandas said to Shri Gokulchandramaji, “I ask this of You—please take me to the home of Shri Gusainji and have me serve there.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for this is: Without being at Shri Gusainji’s home, Shri Thakurji would not feel joy.

Then Shri Gokulchandramaji became very pleased and said, “You asked for My happiness, not your own. You did not seek any personal comfort.”

Later, Narayandas’ niece passed away. On the third day, Narayandas himself passed away. After that, Krishnadas Swami, who lived in Mahavan and belonged to Narayandas’ lineage, Was a sevak of Shri Gusainji. Shri Gokulchandramaji stayed with him for a few days and received seva there.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows: In the divine lila, he too is a sakhi of Narayandas. His name is Mridubeni. That’s why he performed seva. Later, the deity was brought to Shri Gusainji’s home in Mathura.

The conclusion of this story is this: It teaches the dharma of a brahmachari—One who, holding the eligibility for Mahaprasad, never asks for his own happiness, but only considers the joy of the Lord. This is the way of Pushtimarg. The story of Narayandas has no limit. We can only speak of it up to a certain point.

Varta 15 - A Kshatrani of Mahavan

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu’s female sevak, a Kshatrani, who lived in Mahavan, the sentiment of her story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Kshatrani, in the Divine Play, is an intimate companion of Shri Swaminiji. Her name is Bhadra. She was born in the house of a Kshatriya. When she turned eleven years old, her parents spoke about her marriage. She then said, “Do not marry me. On the day you perform my marriage, the groom will die, and you too will die.” Hearing this, her parents became afraid and remained silent.

When she turned thirteen, her relatives began to criticize her parents.

So, her marriage was arranged with someone. The groom came for the wedding. As soon as the marriage rounds were being completed, her mother, father, and the groom—all three died. After that, she remained alone in the house. No relatives in the village would speak to her, saying, “At the time of her marriage, her parents and husband all died. Whoever will love her will die.” This is what people said.

Once, when Shri Acharyaji came to Narayandas’s house, this Kshatrani got his darshan. Since she was a pure soul, she understood, “I should surrender to him.” She then bowed down and prayed before Shri Acharyaji: “Maharaj! Please accept me. Now all my worldly obstacles have been removed.” Shri Acharyaji gave her Naam initiation. Then this Kshatrani asked, “Maharaj! Now what is your command for me?” Shri Acharyaji said, “Do the service of the Lord.”

The Kshatrani replied, “Maharaj! In the Divine Play I have always served you, and now you have told me to do Bhagavad seva. But Bhagavad seva is done by many people. Yet, to attain your lotus feet is very rare. Therefore, do not engage me in external practices. Please give me your service forever. Let me always remain with you. Let me see you. My only shelter is at your lotus feet.”

Shri Acharyaji, being pleased, said, “What you say is true. But I must perform circumambulation of the earth, and for this journey it is not proper for women to accompany.” Then Shri Acharyaji took some kumkum, placed both his feet upon a cloth, and gave the kumkum-imprinted cloth to the Kshatrani saying, “Serve this. I am pleased with you. All your desires will be fulfilled.”

That Kshatrani then lovingly welcomed Shri Acharyaji into her home and served him with the sentiment of serving Shri Swaminiji. Shri Acharyaji gave her darshan and made her experience all the divine rasas. Later, when Shri Acharyaji went on his circumambulation of the earth, he came to Kashi.

One day, that Kshatrani went with a water pot to collect Yamuna water at Brahmand Ghat. Carrying her pot, she entered into the waters of Shri Yamunaji. At the riverbank, in shallow water, she saw four divine forms. The Kshatrani asked, “Why do you, so supremely beautiful, reside in the water?” The four divine forms replied, “Take us to your home. In a few days, Shri Acharyaji will arrive. Then give us to him.”

Kshatrani replied, “I will first ask Shri Acharyaji at home, then I will bring you.” She filled her pot and quickly returned. Going to the

temple, she prayed, “Maharaj! Four divine forms are at the bank of Shri Yamunaji. They say, ‘Bring us to your home.’ What is your command?” Shri Acharyaji said, “Go quickly and bring them.”

She then brought the four forms to the temple, adorned them with clothes, and offered bhog. By this it is shown that the Kshatrani’s attachment was towards serving Shri Acharyaji, not directly towards Bhagavad seva. Yet, Shri Thakurji himself, in the form of four divine images, came to her. Thus, when a Vaishnav’s affection is fixed on the service of Shri Acharyaji, Shri Thakurji himself manifests there without effort.

When Shri Acharyaji learned of this in Kashi, he went to Braj. From there he first went to Adel, and afterwards to Kada. In Kada lived a Kshatriya named Devakpur. His house was near Gadadhar’s.

One day, when Vaishnavs were taking Mahaprasad at Gadadhar’s house, Gadadhar was serving them. Devakpur’s house was slightly higher. From above, Devakpur saw Shri Thakurji himself sitting and eating alongside a Vaishnav. On seeing this, he fainted. Regaining awareness, he hurried to Gadadhar and asked, “Where have all the Vaishnavs gone?” Gadadhar replied, “They have taken Mahaprasad and gone to their homes.” Devakpur said, “Among your Vaishnavs I saw Shri Thakurji himself eating, and then I fainted. Now tell me, how can I again get darshan of Shri Thakurji?”

Gadadhar said, “You are most fortunate, for you have had darshan. Now where will you again get darshan?” Devakpur replied, “Please tell me some way. I surrender to you. If I can attain Shri Thakurji, then my whole life will be fulfilled.” Gadadhar said, “Go to the refuge of Shri Acharyaji. By his grace Vaishnavs get Shri Thakurji’s darshan. By his grace you too will receive it. At present, he has gone from Kashi, but in two or four days he will come here.”

From that day, Devakpur came daily to Gadadhar’s house asking when Shri Acharyaji would arrive. Forgetting all household work, he remained eager. After two or four days, Shri Acharyaji came to Kada. Devakpur came, bowed before him, and prayed, “Maharaj! Please give me your refuge.” Then Gadadhar told Shri Acharyaji the account of Devakpur, how he had seen Shri Thakurji eating among the Vaishnavs, and how he was now burning with longing. Shri Acharyaji understood, “He is a divine soul,” and was pleased. He gave him Naam initiation.

Then Devakpur asked, “Now what is your command for me?” Shri

Acharyaji said, “Come with us to Braj. There, Shri Thakurji will be installed upon your head. You will serve him.” Devakpur’s wife remained at home, and Devakpur went along with Shri Acharyaji.

Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji came to Agra. There lived a Kshatriya named Gajandhavan. His father had much wealth and four sons. Gajjan was the youngest. Only his mother was alive in the house, no other women. His father once arranged for a Bhavai dance to be performed upon a boat. Gajjan, his three brothers, and fifty to sixty relatives and villagers were together on the boat. At midnight, suddenly the boat split apart, and all drowned. Only Gajjan caught hold of a piece of the boat, which drifted four kos down from Agra. In the morning, Gajjan came home and told his mother the news: “Father and brothers all drowned.” Gajjan’s mother then became a sati.

Thus, Gajjan remained alone. He gave up business. For two to four hours he would go sit by Shri Yamunaji, and then remain in his home. He did not speak much with others. In his heart, detachment arose. He thought, “Father and brothers all died, I too will die. What should I do? If the Lord gives grace, that is best.” In this way, he remained indifferent to everything.

Jiyadas Suri lived in Agra. Jiyadas had reached sixty years of age. In Agra, he held the office of Kotwal. He dispensed justice for the whole city of Agra.

One day, a quarrel came between a Brahmani and a Shudra. The Shudra had taken money from the Brahmani but did not return it. Then the Brahmani cried out for justice. The Shudra gave some rupees to Jiyadas and said, “Declare the Brahmani false.” Then Jiyadas, overcome by greed, declared the Brahmani false and wrote the judgment against her.

That Brahmani wailed in grief. Then leprosy spread all over Jiyadas’s body. Jiyadas reflected and came to understand: “I have falsely judged the Brahmani out of greed. Therefore, this work of Kotwali is extremely sinful.”

He gave up the post of Kotwal, called the Brahmani, and said: “Mother! Out of greed I falsely judged you in this way. So please take back your money with interest from me. Because of the sin of offending you, I have fallen into this condition.” Then he returned the Brahmani her money with interest and gave her ten more rupees of his own. The Brahmani began to give him many blessings.

Then Jiyadas renounced everything and went to sit by the bank of Shri Yamunaji. In the third quarter of the day, he would return home and eat and drink. After some days, Jiyadas's body became well, and all the leprosy disappeared.

Later, one day, Gajjan was sitting on the bank of Shri Yamunaji. At that time, Jiyadas too came and sat nearby. Then they spoke with each other. Gajjan told his story: "My father and brothers all drowned and died. My mother became a sati. Therefore, detachment has come upon me."

Then Jiyadas told his story: "I unjustly took money from a Brahmani. Because of this, my body was ruined. Then I came to knowledge. Now, if in any way I can attain God, it will be good."

Then Gajjan said, "I too have this desire. But how can we meet God? Only by the grace of a great Mahapurush can one attain Him." Jiyadas replied, "That is true. But we are great sinners! Where will we find a Mahapurush? Therefore, now we have taken refuge in God and in Shri Yamunaji. Whatever happens will happen." In this way, both of them met daily and spoke together.

While they were living like this, Shri Acharyaji came to Agra. He was performing evening prayers on the bank of Shri Yamunaji. Just then, Gajjan and Jiyadas arrived and got Shri Acharyaji's darshan. Then both of them said to each other, "This is a Mahapurush. We should take his refuge."

Later, Gajjan asked Krishnadas Meghna, "Who is this?" Krishnadas Meghna replied, "This is Shri Vallabhacharyaji. In the South, at Kashi, he refuted Mayavada and revealed the path of devotion."

Then Gajjan and Jiyadas both bowed down and prayed, "Maharaj! We are drowning in the ocean of worldly existence. Please take us into your refuge and deliver us." Then Shri Acharyaji had them bathe in Shri Yamunaji and gave them Naam initiation.

Afterwards, Jiyadas said, "Maharaj! Please come to our house." Shri Acharyaji went to Jiyadas's house. Jiyadas had two sons, Purushottamdas and Chhabil Das. Shri Acharyaji gave them Naam initiation as well.

Later, Shri Acharyaji went to Gajjan's house, which was empty. There he stayed, had the offerings prepared, and accepted the food. Shri Acharyaji gave Gajjan & Jiyadas the leftover food. Then Gajjan and Jiyadas prayed, "Maharaj! Now what is our duty?"

Shri Acharyaji said, "Come with us to Shri Gokul. There Shri Thakurji will be installed with you both, and you will serve Him." Then Gajjan and Jiyadas went along with Shri Acharyaji. Devakpur from Kada also came along.

Narayandas Brahmachari lived in Mahavan. His father used to go to Mathura and bring livelihood from a Kshatriya there, and from that they sustained themselves.

One day, his father took Narayandas with him to Mathura. They went to the house of a Kshatriya and asked for something. The Kshatriya became angry and said: "Shame on you Brahmins! Every morning from your very birth you have lived by begging, yet your stomach is never filled. Have you never felt any shame for this?"

Hearing this, Narayandas felt deeply hurt. He returned to Mahavan. His father begged here and there and brought food, but Narayandas said, "Now never show me your face. I will not eat any alms brought by you." His father tried to console him: "It is the duty of a Brahmin to beg. If we go to beg, sometimes there will be insults. If we do not beg, how will life go on?"

Narayandas replied, "Your duty may be to beg, so you do that. But I will not remain with you." So he went and sat at Brahmand Ghat on the bank of Shri Yamunaji, living only on what came by itself. He recited Gayatri but did not speak with anyone.

Living like this, Narayandas's father and mother passed away. After that, he returned home, and for wealth he tried many different methods, but could not obtain wealth. Then, as the Eleventh Canto speaks of the eight mystic siddhis, he practiced many methods for them as well, but none of the practices bore fruit. He gave up in despair.

Living in this way, he reached the age of forty. Then dispassion arose in him. He thought: "So many years have been wasted in pursuit of wealth. Now I will go to Mathura and perform austerities for God at the place where Dhruvji performed austerities." So he went there and spent the whole day reciting Gayatri, and at night he drank only half a seer of milk. In this way, six months passed.

At that time, Shri Acharyaji came from Agra to Mathura. At Dhruv Ghat, while performing the midday prayers, he looked towards Narayandas. Then in Narayandas' mind arose the thought: “If I could become his sevak, then Shri Thakurji would show me grace.” So Narayandas bowed to Shri Acharyaji and prayed: “Maharaj! Please give me your grace and make me your sevak.”

Shri Acharyaji said: “You are a Brahmachari. Before, you made many efforts for wealth, but they did not succeed. Now you perform austerities for Shri Thakurji, and still you say you want to be a sevak? Why is this?”

Then Narayandas replied: “Maharaj! You are Purna Purushottam. You have told me everything about my life. Without your grace, Shri Thakurji is unattainable. Therefore, after wandering so much in vain, now if you cast your gracious glance upon me, then my heart has become fixed on becoming your sevak. Please show mercy and take me into refuge.”

Then Shri Acharyaji gave Narayandas Naam initiation. Narayandas then prayed: “Maharaj! Now what is our duty? Please give your command.” Shri Acharyaji said: “Come with us to Mahavan. Shri Thakurji will be installed upon your head. You will serve Him.” Then Narayandas said: “My home is in Mahavan. So please come there. And I have a niece, please make her also a sevak.”

So Shri Acharyaji went to Shri Gokul in the evening. He stayed there at night. In the morning, he went to Narayandas’s house in Mahavan and gave Naam initiation to Narayandas’s niece.

At that time, in Mahavan, the four divine forms said to the Kshatrani: “Shri Acharyaji has come to Narayandas’s house. Take us there.”

Prasang 1 – Four Divine Forms Bestowed on the Vaishnavs

Once, while Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was performing the circumambulation of the earth, he came to Mahavan. At that time, the Kshatrani had obtained four divine forms from Shri Yamunaji at Brahmand Ghat. She brought those four divine forms and placed them before Shri Acharyaji.

Then Shri Acharyaji placed the four divine forms upon the heads of four Vaishnavs: Shri Navneetpriyaji was placed upon the head of Gajjan Dhavan. Shri Gokulchandramaji was placed upon the head of

Narayandas. Shri Ladilesji was placed upon the head of Jiyadas Suri, the Kshatriya. Shri Lalittribhangiji was placed upon the head of Devakpur.

And to the four Vaishnavs Shri Acharyaji said: “These are my everything. They have been installed with you. So serve them with love and devotion, properly and in the right way. And if you are unable to serve, then install them in my home.” Then he explained the method of seva to the four.

Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji said to Devakpur and Jiyadas: “Take them home and install them. Gajjan will come later.” Then Jiyadas came home to Agra and began seva. His story will be told further in his varta. Devakpur came to Kada, and the method of his seva will be told in Devakpur’s varta. The method of seva was also told to Narayandas, who performed it. This has already been described earlier in Narayandas’s varta.

Prasang 2 – Shri Navneetpriyaji’s Festival at Gokul

Now Shri Acharyaji, taking Gajjan and Shri Navneetpriyaji along with him, came to Shri Gokul. With him were also Damodardas Harsani and Krishnadas. They came to Shri Gokul. It was early morning, the very day of Janmashtami.

A great festival was celebrated at Shri Gokul. A pot of curd was hung, and the festival of Dadhikada was performed. Shri Navneetpriyaji was placed in a cradle. On one side Damodardas Harsani held it. On the other side Krishnadas Meghna held it. Gajjan danced. Shri Acharyaji rocked the cradle. It was as if Nandarai, Yashodaji, the devotees of Braj, the gopas and gopis all manifested the divine play of Nandalaya. The sevaks were made to experience this divine lila.

Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji installed Shri Navneetpriyaji with Gajjan and then sent him back to Agra. So Gajjan returned to Agra and performed seva. The account of Gajjan’s seva has already been told earlier in his varta.

Later, Shri Acharyaji again went on his circumambulation of the earth. That Kshatrani was indeed such a worthy recipient of Shri Acharyaji’s grace. She had deep, firm devotion in the seva of Shri Acharyaji. The four forms had come to her from the beginning itself, but her affection and attachment was for the seva of Shri Acharyaji. Therefore, her varta is profound. It has not been revealed in much detail.

Varta 16 - Jiyadas Suri Kshatri

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak Jiyadas Suri Kshatri, who lived in Agra, the sentiment of his story is described here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the Divine Play, Jiyadas is the sakhi of Shri Yamunaji. Her name is Syama. Syama has five sakhis, whose names are told here. Kaveri Sakhi manifested as Purushottamdas. Manohar Sakhi manifested as Chabildas. Hira Sakhi manifested as Krishnadas. Chabidhama Sakhi manifested here as Harji. Manjuki Sakhi manifested here as Mathuramall. Now, the way these six obtained Shri Ladilesji by serving him in the Divine Play is described here.

Prasang 1 – Jiyadas Suri's Seva of Shri Ladilesji

Now Shri Acharyaji placed Shri Ladilesji upon the head of Jiyadas Suri Kshatri. Then he came to Agra. From morning till evening, Jiyadas engaged his mind in seva with full focus, performing tanuja, vittaja, and manasi seva. By practicing such devotion, such longing (viraha) arose that his body left him. In this way, Shri Ladilesji received seva from Jiyadas for four prahars (a full day and night).

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that Jiyadas was an exalted devotee. He became absorbed in the Divine Play. Thereafter, he no longer looked towards worldly or Vedic matters.

Afterwards, Jiyadas had two sons, Purushottamdas and Chabildas. For some days they performed seva. But these two brothers had no descendants.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that after the body of Jiyadas departed, both brothers left worldly dealings and fixed their minds on seva of Shri Thakurji.

When they realized that their end was near, the two brothers placed Shri Ladilesji upon the head of their maternal uncle, Krishnadas Chopra Kshatri. Then Krishnadas Chopra performed seva properly for some time. Later, when a plague came, all members of Krishnadas's household died. He alone remained.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that the family was not divine. Therefore, none became sevaks. Whatever wealth was divine was accepted by Shri Thakurji. The rest remained worldly. Later, in Agra, Pathans came and plundered the village, killing many. In that calamity, when Krishnadas had Shri Ladilesji, all his wealth was looted.

Then Krishnadas's friends Harji and Mathuramall, who were sevaks of Shri Acharyaji, gave him shelter. Krishnadas went to live with them. Mathuramall performed seva for three days, then left his body and attained Bhagavad-prapti. Afterwards, Harji and Krishnadas together performed seva. Later, Krishnadas's body departed and he attained the Divine Play. Afterwards, Harji performed seva of Shri Ladilesji for one and a half years. After that, he brought Shri Ladilesji to the house of Shri Gusainji in Shri Gokul.

Thus Jiyadas was such a blessed sevak of Shri Acharyaji. He was a recipient of divine grace. The full extent of his varta cannot be told, so only this much is said here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Later, when Harji's body weakened, the great sons of Shri Garidharji—Shri Damodarji, Shri Murlidharji, and Shri Gopinathji—installed Shri Thakurji in their house in Shri Gokul with all seva materials, clothes, and ornaments. Then, with longing (viraha), Harji left his body.

Thus, these six were recipients of Shri Acharyaji's divine grace. They were related to the Divine Play, and therefore in one single birth they attained the Lord.

Varta 17 - Devakpur Kshatri

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Devakpur Kshatri, who lived in Kada, the sentiment of his story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Devakpur and Devakpur's wife are both sakhis of Shri Yashodaji. In the Divine Play, Devakpur's name is Praveena, and Devakpur's wife's name in the Divine Play is Rasleena.

Prasang 1 – Devakpur and His Wife's Seva of Shri Lalittribhangiji

On the head of Devakpur, Shri Acharyaji placed the seva of Shri Lalittribhangiji. Then Devakpur, along with his wife, performed seva of Shri Lalittribhangiji for many days. Afterwards, Devakpur's body departed. Then Devakpur's wife continued to perform seva for many days.

Some days later, the body of Devakpur's wife also departed. Then her relatives performed her cremation. After that, when they returned home and opened the temple doors, their sons saw that all the seva materials were just as they had been placed, but Shri Thakurji was not there. The seat was empty. Shri Thakurji had disappeared. No one could understand where. Thus he disappeared. Devakpur had four sons. But Shri Thakurji did not have seva done by them.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Although they had received names from Shri Gopinathji, the elder brother of Shri Gusainji, yet they were attached to worldly and Vedic affairs. Therefore, Shri Thakurji did not allow seva to be performed by them. And those whom Shri Gopinathji gave names became inclined to the path of maryada (the path of discipline and rules). Shri Baldevji is the form of maryada. And Shri Lalittribhangiji is Shri Acharyaji's seviya Pushti Purushottam. How could such a connection be established?

And how could seva of Shri Thakurji be given to Vaishnavs in the presence of the four sons? Therefore, Shri Thakurji disappeared. Later,

in Sinhanand, there was a Brahmani sevak of Shri Gusainji. In her home, Shri Thakurji manifested. Shri Thakurji himself told Brahmani all the details. Then, through hidden ways, he accepted seva for many days. This is written in the Bhav Prakash of Shri Gusainji's varta, how he entered into Shri Gusainji's lineage.

Thus, Devakpur and Devakpur's wife were great devotees of God. Therefore, only this much of their varta is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This varta shows the principle that without being a divine soul, one cannot have love for Shri Thakurji. Nor does Shri Thakurji accept seva from them.

Varta 18 - Dinkar Seth Kshatri

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Dinkar Seth Kshatri, who lived in Prayag. The sentiment of his story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Dinkar Seth, in the Divine Play, is a Bhagavad-related sakhi of Shri Thakurji. She has great love for Shri Swaminiji. She always asks Shri Thakurji about Shri Swaminiji's talks. To her, she shares everything about her love. In the Divine Play her name is "Manuatri." She always listens to Shri Swaminiji's talks and then tells Shri Thakurji. In listening to both their talks, her mind was so eager that it could not rest without listening. It became an addiction. Because of this, she is very dear to both Shri Thakurji and Shri Swaminiji.

This Dinkar Seth was born in the house of a very wealthy Kshatriya in Prayag. From the age of five, he developed a liking for hearing stories and talks about Shri Thakurji. Later, when he was around ten to twelve years old, whenever he found ornaments or clothes in the house, he would give them away to those who narrated stories. Because of this, his parents and his three brothers used to call him a thief. They did not trust him at home.

Once, when Dinkar Seth's elder brother was to be married, they dressed him in a fine silk coat embroidered with gold, tied a turban, adorned him with ornaments, mounted him on a horse, and took him in the wedding procession. Then Dinkar Seth thought in his heart, "If today I get an opportunity, I will give all this to the story narrators."

So when the wedding procession reached the bride's door, and the whole family became busy with marriage rituals, Dinkar Seth went away to the houses of the storytellers and distributed all the ornaments and clothes to them. He also told them, "Do not tell my brothers, father, or family members."

Later, he returned home wearing a simple coarse cloth. When his mother asked, "Where are the ornaments and clothes?" and then when his father came searching, they gave Dinkar Seth a severe beating. He was locked up in a room for three days. But Dinkar Seth did not speak, nor did he say anything. Then his father and brothers gave up in frustration.

After this, Dinkar Seth would spend all his days listening to stories and talks. Wherever he went, listeners and speakers called him “Seth” and praised him. But among his relatives and family, he was called a thief. He would return home in the evening. Whatever food his parents gave, he ate. Whatever clothes they gave, he wore. Once, at night, if somewhere there was a wake with Bhagavad talks at the storyteller’s house, he would stay there. His family would not let him stay at home. Whatever came into his sight, he would stealthily take away and give to the storytellers. Therefore, among his relatives, he was called a thief. Because of this, he did not get married.

In this way, while his parents lived, food arrangements continued. Afterward, when his parents passed away, he could not get along with his brothers. Then Dinkar Seth thought, “It is better now to leave this village.”

One morning, Dinkar Seth went to bathe at the Triveni ghat. At that time, Krishna Das Meghna, who was staying at Adail with Shri Acharyaji, had been sent by him to go into the city to bring some sugar worth two or four rupees. So Krishna Das Meghna also came to Triveni. Both were bathing. Then Dinkar Seth asked, “Who are you?” Krishna Das asked in return, “Who are you? Why are you asking me? Do you have some work?”

Then Dinkar Seth said, “I want to leave this village. That is why I asked, thinking you to be a stranger. If you know anyone who speaks Bhagavad stories, I want to go with them. In my house there is plenty of wealth. When my parents were alive, I managed somehow. Now my three brothers always call me a thief and speak harsh words to me. I have not been married either. Thakur has done well in this. That is why I want to leave.”

Krishna Das, knowing it was divine arrangement, said, “If you are addicted to listening to stories, then come once to Adail and hear from the mouth of Shri Acharyaji. Then, afterwards, go wherever your heart wishes.” Just on hearing this, Dinkar Seth immediately got on a boat from there and came to Adail.

At that time, Shri Acharyaji had just woken from rest. It was one and a quarter watches past midday. Then Dinkar Seth bowed down. Shri Acharyaji said, “Come, Dinkar Seth! Sit and listen to the katha.”

Then Shri Acharyaji explained the Bhramar Geet from the tenth skandha. Hearing this, streams of tears began to flow from Dinkar Seth’s eyes. In his heart, he thought, “Alas, alas! So many of my days

were wasted like this. Now I will take shelter here, remain with him always, and drink the nectar of his talks."

After the katha was completed, Dinkar Seth prayed, "Maharaj! Please have mercy on me and take me into your shelter." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "You have listened to many kathas. But until now, why have you not become a sevak? You must have met many great pandits and swamis. Why did you not become their sevak?"

Dinkar Seth replied, "Maharaj! All the pandits and swamis I met were companions only of wealth. Wherever I met them, they treated me with great love while I gave them gifts. Now no one speaks to me. But Shri Thakurji has been merciful, that I got your darshan. You are the Lord Himself. If I had gone to another country, my life would have been wasted. Now please deliver me. I have no worldly restrictions."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Go and bathe in Shri Yamunaji with all your clothes." So Dinkar Seth bathed and came back. Then Shri Acharyaji gave him naam-nivedan (initiation by name) and said, "Do Bhagavad seva." Then Dinkar Seth said, "Maharaj! You know what is in the heart. I only wish to hear your words of katha. In this itself is all seva." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Good. Stay with us."

At that time, Dinkar Seth had one hundred rupees with him. Out of that, he offered fifty as bhent to Shri Acharyaji. With the other fifty, he daily arranged for the preparation of Angakari (food offerings).

Prasang 1 – Dinkardas's Eagerness for Katha

So, Dinkardas had great attachment to Katha. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu himself used to narrate Katha in Adail. Then one day, Dinkar Seth went to the bank of Shri Yamunaji to prepare cooking. There he bathed, kneaded flour, shaped the Angakari bread, placed it on the griddle, and put firewood on top. At that time, one water-carrier of Shri Acharyaji came there to fetch water. Then Dinkardas asked him, "What is Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu doing now?"

That water-carrier replied, "Shri Acharyaji has opened the book; now he will begin Katha." Then Dinkar Seth, just by hearing the words of that water-carrier, immediately swallowed down the raw dough and drank water. He did not bake it. Quickly he came to listen to the Katha.

After Shri Acharyaji finished the Katha, that water-carrier said to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! Dinkar Seth has eaten raw Angakari without

baking and has come here." Then Shri Acharyaji asked Dinkar Seth, "Why did you eat the Angakari without baking it?"

Then Dinkar Seth replied, "Maharaj! I will bake and eat Angakari every day. But when will I hear the nectar of Katha from your mouth again? If I had stayed to bake it, how would I have received this nectar?"

Then Shri Acharyaji became very pleased and said, "From today onwards, after you finish cooking, offer the Bhog, bring Mahaprasad, and then come here. Only when you arrive will I begin Katha. Without your arrival, I will not speak Katha. From today you are the chief listener of Katha."

After that, Dinkar Seth also began cooking quickly, thinking, "If Shri Acharyaji is sitting waiting for me, then this is not good." And on other days too, if there was even a small delay, Shri Acharyaji would wait until Dinkar Seth arrived, and only then would he narrate Katha.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here this principle is shown —that to eat raw, unoffered Angakari is a great fault. But because of the firm love for Shri Acharyaji's Katha, its meaning was accepted differently. Therefore, it did not become an obstacle, and instead Shri Acharyaji became pleased. This shows that if there is firm love for Shri Acharyaji, then no fault becomes an obstacle.

After this, as long as he lived, Dinkar Seth listened to Katha from the mouth of Shri Acharyaji. Day and night he remained absorbed in the meditation of Divine Leela. In the Leela also, Shri Swaminiji would converse with him about everything. Thus, by listening to Shri Acharyaji's Katha, he was made to realize his own true form. Such was Dinkar Seth, a Bhagavadiya (devoted to the Lord).

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this Varta, the principle shown to Vaishnavas is that if one has the desire to listen to Katha, then first quickly finish cooking, offer it to Shri Thakurji, and then go. Therefore Shri Acharyaji has said in "Bhaktavardhini": "Sevayam va kathayam va yasyasaktirdradha bhavet"

First is seva, afterwards is Katha. Both should be performed so that there is firm attachment to the Lord. In whichever way it may happen, the highest aim is attachment. This is what happened with Dinkar Seth. Thus, he attained the experience of the Divine Leela.

Varta 19 - Dinkardas and Mukunddas

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevaks, Dinkardas and Mukunddas, the two brothers, who were Sahania Kayasthas residing in Malwa Desh, the sentiment of their story is described here:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, they were the brothers of Nandraiji. Dinkardas was Dharanand and Mukunddas was Dhruvanand. They were born in Malwa in a Kayastha family. Their father lived near the ruler in Ujjain. One day, their father lost favor with the ruler. Then Dinkardas and Mukunddas, leaving their father's service, came back home. Within ten to fifteen days, their father left his body. At that time, both brothers were about ten to twelve years old. Then there arose difficulty in household wealth. Leaving home, they went to Kashi. There they earned much wealth. Then the two brothers began returning home. When they had gone about one kos outside Kashi, a serpent came out. It bit Mukunddas and went into its hole. The poison spread. Then Dinkardas carried Mukunddas back to Kashi. Many attempts with healers were made. But the poison did not subside. Then Dinkardas cried aloud in grief. At that time, Shri Acharyaji was residing in Kashi at the house of Purushottam. Krishnadas had come to the bazaar for some work. Hearing the wailing of Dinkardas, Krishnadas, whose heart was soft towards the devotees of the Lord, asked: "Why are you in such sorrow?" Then Dinkardas said, "First, because of the sorrow of wealth, we left our house and came here. We earned wealth. On the way home, my brother was bitten by a serpent. Many efforts were made, but the poison did not subside. Now I too will drown myself in Ganga here in Kashi. Where can I go home, and what can I do?"

Then compassion arose in Krishnadas. And by divine arrangement, the Charanamrit of Shri Acharyaji was with him. He mixed it in water and gave it to Mukunddas to drink. At once, the poison subsided. Mukunddas rose and sat up. By the Charanamrit, his mind became purified. Then Mukunddas bowed down with reverence to Krishnadas, taking him as the Lord's form, and asked, "Where is Shri Acharyaji residing?" Then Krishnadas said, "Why do you bow to me?" Then Mukunddas said, "Seated in your heart, Shri Acharyaji has bestowed grace on me. Otherwise, I would have been lost in the ocean of worldly existence. Shri Acharyaji I did not know, but you I knew. Yet you, out of compassion, have revealed Him to me. Therefore, bowing

down to a devotee of the Lord is not inappropriate."

Then Krishnadas said, "This matter of the Charanamrit, do not tell Shri Acharyaji. Otherwise, he will be displeased with me. And do not tell it to anyone in the town. All will cause me suffering. Then it will become difficult to live here."

Later Mukunddas asked Krishnadas, "Where is Shri Acharyaji residing?" Krishnadas said, "He is at the house of Purushottamdas." Saying this, Krishnadas went for his business. Then Mukunddas said, "Brother, let us take refuge in Shri Acharyaji." Dinkardas asked, "Who is Shri Acharyaji?" Mukunddas replied, "He is the Supreme Lord Himself. From receiving His Charanamrit, I have gained true knowledge. When you too will have His darshan and receive His Charanamrit, then you will know the true form of Shri Acharyaji. Therefore, let us go quickly. Do not delay."

Then both brothers came, bowed to Shri Acharyaji, and prayed: "Maharaj! We are great sinners. We are caught in the happiness and sorrow of this world. Please deliver us." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "You are Kayasthas; how will this path of Pushtimarg be possible for you?" Then Mukunddas said, "Maharaj! By Your grace everything is possible. If Your grace falls upon a Shudra or Chandal, then too everything becomes possible. If Your grace falls upon a great learned Brahmin and yet it is not, then nothing becomes possible. Therefore, please bestow grace upon us and take us into Your refuge. By the power of refuge, our well-being will be accomplished." Then Shri Acharyaji, pleased, said, "I know, this is the work of Krishnadas Meghna."

Afterwards, Dinkardas and Mukunddas bathed and offered their names to Shri Acharyaji. They stayed some days with Shri Acharyaji, learning all the ways of the path. Later they requested, "Maharaj! If it is Your order, we will go home. What should be our duty now?" Then Shri Acharyaji wrote the Brahmasambandh-patri and gave it with His signature, saying, "Perform seva of these. Whatever you eat or drink, first offer it to them and then take it." Then both brothers, taking leave, returned to their home in Malwa. The womenfolk cooked, prepared bhog, and set it aside separately, saying, "It is not divine. We do not have the mind to become sevaks of Shri Acharyaji." But Mukunddas had received Shri Acharyaji's Charanamrit. Therefore, he mastered all the Shastras, Vedas, and Puranas by heart.

Prasang 1 – Mukunddas's Beautiful Poetry

Mukunddas composed very beautiful poetry. He wrote of Shri Acharyaji, Shri Gusainji, and Shri Thakurji equally. Mukunddas composed a granth in the local language called 'Mukund Sagar.' In it, he gave the meanings of the twelfth skandha of Shri Bhagavat (till the end). Once, Mukunddas went to an official in Ujjain. Then the Brahmin scholars of Ujjain came and met him, saying, "If you say, we will recite the Bhagavat to you." Then Mukunddas replied, "There is no time now. When there is time, then I will listen."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for this is that in front of the granths like Subodhiniji of Shri Acharyaji, where is there time left to listen to your discourses? But to not dishearten the Brahmins, he said, "When there is time, then I will listen."

Thus those Brahmins came and asked Mukunddas again and again, "Whenever you say, we will recite the Bhagavat to you." In this way many days passed. One day, Mukunddas was playing chaupar (a board game). A Brahmin scholar saw him and thought, "Today I have found the chance to speak." After Mukunddas finished playing chaupar, the Brahmin said, "If you say, I will recite the Bhagavat to you." Then Mukunddas replied, "When there is time, then I will listen." Then the Brahmin said, "You have time to play chaupar, but to listen to the Bhagavat you say you will only when there is time. What is the reason for this?"

Then Mukunddas thought, "He has given me a very weighty reply. Now I too must answer him." Then he said, "Do you know about our Bhagavat?" The Brahmin asked, "Is your Bhagavat different?" Then Mukunddas said, "Yes, our Bhagavat is different." The Brahmin said, "Then you recite your Bhagavat to me." Mukunddas replied, "Some time, when there is an opportunity, I will recite it to you." Saying this, he put it off. But that Brahmin was not on the path (Pushtimarg). Therefore, he did not hear the discourse from his mouth.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Therefore, it is written among the sixty-four offenses: "To listen to the Bhagavat from a non-Vaishnav is equivalent to three births as a tree," etc. Thus, if a Pushtimargiya Vaishnav listens, a fault arises. This causes great doubt in the soul. Why? Because in the divine name of the Lord, everyone has a right—even Shudras and Chandals. Whoever chants or listens, all attain welfare. In the Bhagavat also, Ajamila and others became purified. This glory is famous in the world. And in Pushtimarg, why then is listening to the Bhagavat from non-followers not allowed? If one listens to the divine name, how can fault arise? This doubt is very deep.

Here it is explained: In the path of Maryada, the fruit is liberation. And in the path of Pushti, the fruit is exclusive Pushti-bhakti. That bhakti happens only through the refuge of Shri Acharyaji. Therefore, the difference between refuge and non-refuge is explained. This heart-lotus is the seat where refuge, love, all dharma, and the Lord reside. When bliss related to Shri Acharyaji completely enters the heart, then refuge is perfected. In the heart, rasa and bliss enter in various ways.

One way: through the eyes. Seeing something beautiful, bliss arises in the heart. Therefore, by having the darshan of Thakur related to Shri Acharyaji, bliss is attained. But if one sees some worldly, Vedic, or otherwise pleasing object without relation to Shri Acharyaji, and bliss arises, that is non-refuge. This sight-based non-refuge is a great fault.

Through the ears: by hearing, happiness and sorrow enter the heart as rasa. Therefore, the leftovers of one's words, heard through the ears, enter the heart. Thus, one should listen only from the mouth of those who maintain the mood of servitude. This mood of servitude is only in the Pushtimargiya Vaishnavas of Vallabhkul. Therefore, listening only from their mouth strengthens dharma in the heart. If one listens with affection from others' mouths, then it is non-refuge, because their impurity enters the heart, and the refuge of Shri Acharyaji does not become firm. If one is compelled to listen out of social courtesy, then the mind should not be attached. One should fix the mind on one's Ashtakshar mantra.

Thus, the chief principle of this path is that one should not engage in word-exchanges with others. Union comes through speech. Therefore, "Silence accomplishes all ends." Hence, one should neither ask about Bhagavad-dharma from non-followers, nor tell them of one's own. In this way, none of the senses nor the mind should find pleasure without relation to Shri Acharyaji. This is the practice of refuge to Shri Acharyaji.

Therefore, Mukunddas's refuge in Shri Acharyaji was firm. If he heard a discourse from that pandit, it would not hinder him. But seeing him, if ordinary Vaishnavs also listened, then they would be harmed. Thus it is shown: If our knowledge is not so firm, then we should not listen from non-followers. Why? Because if the mind develops strong faith in their words, then slowly, slowly, the mind will go into the practices they prescribe, away from this path. Therefore, we should not listen. Thus, sometimes at gatherings, one should only speak or hear of Bhagavad-dharma from those connected to Shri Acharyaji.

And about Mukunddas playing chaupar (the board game), it was for

this reason: Whenever non-followers came speaking of various karmas and dharmas, Mukunddas would take out the chaupar and sit playing. Thus, all the others became disheartened and went away. By this, no one was offended. People thought he was simply attached to chaupar. In this way, he kept the dharma of Pushtimarg hidden in his heart.

Then, one time a solar eclipse came. At that time, Mukunddas bathed in the river and was standing there chanting the divine name. At that time, that pandit came and said, “Good, at this time please recite some of your Bhagavat.” Then Mukunddas took one verse of the Bhagavat and began to explain its meaning. The whole day and the whole night passed. Morning came. People from the village came for bathing in the river. Then that pandit said, “Another day has dawned. Will you now finish the meaning of this verse?” Mukunddas replied, “The meaning of this one verse will take six months.” Then that pandit remained exhausted. He said, “You have the power given by God. How can an ordinary soul know?” Mukunddas then said, “Such is our Bhagavat. If you know something, then recite it to me.” Then that pandit accepted defeat and went home. After that, if any pandit came and asked him something, Mukunddas would give such a strong refutation in reply that those pandits would never come again. Such was the power of Shri Acharyaji’s grace. He entered into all the scriptures like Shri Subodhini and others.

After some days, Mukunddas, meditating on manasi-seva, left his body and attained the divine lila. Then a Vaishnav came and said to Shri Acharyaji, “Mukunddas has attained Avantika.” Shri Acharyaji rebuked that Vaishnav, saying, “Do not say it in that way. Say rather that Avantika has attained Mukunddas.” Thus, Mukunddas became firmly established as a devotee of the Lord.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is that worldly people desire pilgrimage places. But pilgrimage places desire devotees of the Lord—so that the touch of devotees may purify them. Whoever goes near the pilgrimage (becomes free of all sins). And as for Dinkardas, the elder brother, his varta is not written in detail. From the day he came to Malwa as a sevak of Shri Acharyaji, from that day he daily read the Brahmasambandh-patri with Shri Mahaprabhuji’s signature, beating his head and weeping: “Alas! In the divine lila we were brothers of Nandaraya, and now for so many days we have been wandering in this world. Shame on us!” In this way, lamenting in separation, within three months he attained the divine lila. Therefore, his varta is of an indescribable state of viraha (separation). For this reason, it is not described in detail, for people in the world would oppose it.

Thus, both brothers, Dinkardas and Mukunddas, were great recipients of grace and devotees of the Lord.

Varta 20 - Prabhudas Jalota Kshatriya

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Prabhudas Jalota Kshatriya, resident of Singhanad, the sentiment of his story is described here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Prabhudas Jalota Kshatriya is, in the divine play, the sakhi of Lalitaji. Her name is "Manmathmoda." She prepares all the materials for the play of Vihar (divine pastimes), she remains absorbed in conversation with Lalitaji. That is why her name is "Manmathmoda."

So, in Singhanad, he took birth in the house of a Kshatriya. When he was thirteen years old, he was married. That wife turned out to be of very bad character. She abused everyone. Whatever thing she obtained, she would steal it and give it to her parents. In this way, due to her conduct, Prabhudas's mother and father left their bodies. And all relatives, because of that woman's misdeeds, no one came to the house.

So one day, that woman said to Prabhudas, "Bring some wealth from somewhere." Then Prabhudas said, "Where is wealth? If I get it, I will bring it." Then the wife beat Prabhudas. Anger rose in Prabhudas. He then beat the wife. Then the wife tore her bangles, shaved her head, and went to the village chief, saying: "I am no longer Prabhudas's wife. If he comes to this house, I will kill myself."

Then Prabhudas also came. He said, "I am leaving this house. You and I are separated." In this way, making the separation clear, he left the village. He came to the royal city Sikandarabad. There Ramdas Kshatriya, one of his community, lived. He stayed there. Ramdas was in the company of a Vaishnav of the path of maryada (discipline). So Prabhudas stayed there for some days.

At that time, Shri Acharyaji was staying near Sikandarabad in a garden. Prabhudas came there. Having the darshan of Shri Acharyaji, he felt in his heart: "I should become his sevak." Then he prayed to Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! Please make me your sevak, by your grace."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Your Ramdas is in the company of a follower of the maryada path. Therefore, do not become my sevak." Then Prabhudas said, "Maharaj! If you say, then I will also make

Ramdas your sevak. Then will you make me your sevak? He will not oppose me."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "What will happen if you make him sevak? His acceptance lies only in maryada. But go, bring Ramdas here. We will make both of you sevaks together."

Then Prabhudas went to Ramdas and said: "Shri Vallabhacharyaji is verily the Supreme Lord Purushottam. He has come. He is in the garden outside the village. If both of us become sevaks, then we can do seva together."

Then Ramdas said, "I already have a guru, a vairagi. His kanthi (neck beads) I wear. So how can I take another guru now?" Then Prabhudas said, "Then things will not work between you and me. Give me my clothes and utensils."

Then Ramdas said, "For your sake, I will become sevak. But I will not leave my taban (mark of my former guru)." Then Prabhudas said, "Become sevak, but do not insist on your ways."

Then both Ramdas and Prabhudas came. Shri Acharyaji bathed and gave names to both of them. To Prabhudas, the realization of Shri Acharyaji's true form came. But to Ramdas, it did not.

Then Prabhudas prayed, "Maharaj! By your grace, please make both of us offer our surrender." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Not Ramdas." Then Prabhudas understood. He said, "At least, by your grace, accept me." Then Shri Acharyaji gave Brahmasambandh to Prabhudas.

Afterwards, Prabhudas told Shri Acharyaji that both he and Ramdas would do seva together. Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Not now. After some days." Saying this, he went to Shri Gokul. Prabhudas followed the Pushtimarg tradition. Ramdas followed the maryada-marg tradition.

After some days, Shri Acharyaji's eldest son, Shri Gopinathji, came to Sikandarabad. Then Ramdas prayed, "Maharaj! Please install the seva." Then Shri Gopinathji, at the house of a Brahmin, where Shri Madanmohanji was present, after giving some things to the Brahmin, placed them on the heads of both of them. After that, Shri Gopinathji went to Adel.

Then Ramdas continued the maryada-marg tradition – the rituals of invocation, immersion, and puja. Later, one night at midnight, Prabhudas took his belongings and secretly left, thinking: "How long

should I adjust with Ramdas? He has no knowledge. And just as Shri Gopinathji, who follows the maryada path, installed him, so I will leave here."

Thus he went to Shri Gokul, did dandavat to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Prabhudas has come?" Then Prabhudas prayed, "Maharaj! Now I am freed from very bad company."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "I had already told you, he is fit for the maryada path. You are from Pushtimarg. You did well to leave his company and come."

Then Prabhudas prayed, "Maharaj! Now please keep me near your lotus feet. I have wandered much in this world." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Now remain with me happily." From that day onwards, Prabhudas stayed with Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhuji himself.

Prasang 1 – Shri Acharyaji in Vishrant Ghat, Mathura

One day Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu went to Mathura. At Vishrant Ghat he sat down nearby and performed Sandhyavandan (evening prayers). Nearby, four Vaishnavas were standing: Damodardas Harsani, Krishnadas Meghan, Prabhudas, and one Vaishnav of Mathura.

At that time, the sevaks of Rupa and Sanatan of Krishna Chaitanya came to Shri Acharyaji, had darshan, and did dandavat (prostration). Afterwards, Rupa and Sanatan asked Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! Who are these Vaishnavas?" Then Shri Acharyaji said, "They are my sevaks."

Then Rupa and Sanatan said, "Maharaj! Your path is Pushti, but why are these weak?" Then Shri Acharyaji said, "I had forbidden them not to enter into this path. But they did not listen to my words. They are now bearing the result of that."

In this way, Shri Acharyaji spoke with deep meaning, but Rupa and Sanatan did not understand anything. Afterwards, Rupa and Sanatan, taking permission, went to have darshan of Shri Jagannathrayji. Then Krishna Chaitanya asked them, "From where have you come?" Then Rupa and Sanatan said, "We have come after having darshan of Baj (Vallabhacharyaji)."

Then Krishna Chaitanya asked, "Did you have darshan of Shri

Vallabhacharyaji there?" Then Rupa and Sanatan said, "At Vishrant Ghat in Mathura we had darshan."

Then Krishna Chaitanya asked, "Was there any conversation?" Then Rupa and Sanatan said, "We asked, 'Your path is Pushti, but your Vaishnavas appear very weak?' Then you said, 'I had forbidden them not to enter into this path, but they did not listen. They are now bearing the result of that.'"

Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji's feeling entered Krishna Chaitanya, and for one muhurt (short time) he fell unconscious. In this way, when it was told three times, he fell unconscious three times. Afterwards, when asked the fourth time, Rupa and Sanatan said, "Now we cannot tell further." Then Krishna Chaitanya understood something.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why is this said? Because Rupa and Sanatan had some knowledge of Shri Acharyaji's true form. Therefore, they understood something. If they had understood everything, then their body would have been left at that very moment. And Shri Acharyaji said, "I had forbidden them not to enter this path, but they did not listen. Now they are bearing the result." Just like in the Panchadhyayi, Shri Thakurji told the Braj bhaktas: "Go home." But the Braj bhaktas did not accept this word. Then they obtained the fruit of Raslila.

So now this is spoken in maryada (discipline) style. Why? Because the Vedic maryada is this – when someone comes to become a sevak, the first time, they must be told "No." This is to see the firmness of the sevak's feelings. Afterwards, if his complete love for becoming sevak is there, then he is accepted as sevak. Then he obtains the fruit of that. Therefore, to a Vaishnav it is first said, "No." And "Do not enter this path" – this path is of the Braj bhaktas.

When the Braj bhaktas surrendered themselves completely, then food, pleasures of the body – all were left aside. They bore the state of separation. Because of this, their bodies became thin, they rose with sadness of separation, tears filled their eyes, their throats choked, their entire body perspired, they became unconscious, they laughed, they wept, they danced. These are the symptoms of a bhakta.

Prasang 2 – Prabhudas Makes a Fault in Cooking

And Prabhudas always did the cooking with his own hands. One day the cooking went wrong. The lentils remained raw and the bread burned. Then in Prabhudas's mind came this thought: "How can such

spoiled food be offered to Shri Thakurji?"Therefore, he mixed it with Charanamrit and took it for himself.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why is this so? Because he was a Vaishnav of Pushtimarg. His mind was tender. Just as Shri Thakurji is extremely tender, so too is the mind of the bhaktas. Therefore, he thought, "How can such food be offered? And burned grain has a fault." "Vrintaka cha kalingam cha dagdhannam cha masoorikah" – considering this, he thought it not suitable for Shri Thakurji. And taking food without offering is a great fault. Therefore, he mixed it with Charanamrit and took it.

Then Shri Thakurji said to Shri Acharyaji: "I saw Prabhudas's way today. He did not offer bhog to me. He took it himself."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that although Shri Thakurji is one, the son of Nandraj, yet according to the bhava of the bhaktas, as many bhaktas there are, so many Thakurjis there are. So in Prabhudas's bhava, Shri Thakurji said that Prabhudas had not offered bhog.

Then Shri Acharyaji said to Prabhudas, "Why did you take Shri Thakurji's bhog today without offering?" Then Prabhudas humbly said, "Maharaj! The lentils remained raw and the bread was burned. So I mixed it with Charanamrit and took it."

Shri Acharyaji said, "Why did you cook like this? Shri Thakurji watched with great patience. Therefore, with care, cook good food, offer bhog, and then take it." From that day, Prabhudas carefully cooked the meals.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that although the fault of the food was removed by mixing with Charanamrit, still it did not become an article of bhog for the Lord. Therefore, a Vaishnav must take prasadi food only in the same way as if it had been offered to Shri Thakurji.

If yogurt has been placed separately, then rice should not be mixed in it and taken by oneself. Why? Because milk-rice and curd-rice are each separate offerings according to bhakta's bhava. Therefore, only that which has been offered as prasadi should be taken, not anything else mixed by oneself for bhog.

The way of a sevak is to take only that which is like the Lord's uchchhishta (remnants), not in any other manner. This is the characteristic of a devoted and faithful wife (pativrata). Such is the

sentiment being shown.

Prasang 3 – Shri Acharyaji in Radha Kund

And once Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came to Braj. Near Govardhan is the place Radha Kund. It was the days of winter. There quickly Shri Acharyaji cooked, offered bhog, and himself partook. Afterwards, he said to Prabhudas, “Take Mahaprasad.” Then Prabhudas said, “Maharaj! I have not bathed.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning here is this – Shri Acharyaji’s sevaks each used to cook separately, and they would take. But Shri Acharyaji, after bathing in Shri Kund, cooked, offered bhog, and partook. That place belongs to Shri Swaminiji. It is very dear to him. Therefore, in order to show grace upon Prabhudas, Shri Acharyaji said, “Take Mahaprasad.”

Then Prabhudas spoke the words of maryada: “I have not bathed.” At that time Shri Acharyaji was absorbed in the divine play of Pushti. So he showed Prabhudas the true form of Braj.

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, speaking of both worlds, showed the true form of Braj, saying

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वृक्षे वृक्षे वेणुधारी पने पने चतुभुजः । यत्र वृन्दावने तत्र लक्ष्यालक्ष्यकथा कुतः ॥१॥

On every tree there is the Flute Holder (Shri Krishna), on every leaf there is the

Four-Armed One (Shri Narayan). Where there is Vrindavan, how can there be any talk of

what is seen or unseen?

जलाद प रजः पुण्यं रजसोऽ प जलंवरम ् । यत्र वृन्दावनं तत्र स्नात्वास्नात्वाकथा कुतः ॥२॥

More sacred than water is the dust, and greater than dust is the water. Where there is

Vrindavan, what meaning is there in saying “bathed” or “unbathed”?

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Speaking thus with grace, Shri Acharyaji showed Prabhudas the divine

form of Braj.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Under each and every tree, Shri Venudhari, the lifter of Govardhan, is playing with his bhaktas. Such trees are divine. How are their leaves? In the form of Chaturbhuj Narayan. Thus the trees of Vrindavan are the very form of Shri Govardhandhar. Their intention is to serve as support, their leaves being in the form of Chaturbhuj Narayan.

Such is Vrindavan. It is both perceivable and imperceivable. For worldly people, it is imperceivable. But for the devotees, it is of divine form. This cannot be explained in words. This matter can be known by bhaktas – those who know Krishna's form. But the Krishna form in the trees should not be revealed to ordinary people.

Just as the dust of Vrindavan is greater than water, and greater than dust is water. Therefore, what need is there to talk of bathing there? Whether one bathes in water or applies the dust, both are the same. When the dust rises and touches, then bathing is not needed, yet for maryada one may bathe.

Hearing this, Prabhudas had darshan of the divine form of Shri Vrindavan. Then without bathing, he took Mahaprasad, by the command of Shri Acharyaji. In this way, the divine form of Shri Vrindavan was described to Prabhudas, where Vedic maryada does not apply.

Prasang 4 – Prabhudas Gives Liberation in Exchange for

Yogurt

And once Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was adorning Shri Govardhandhar in his temple. Then it came into his mind: "If there were yogurt today, it should be offered." So he said to Prabhudas, "Go, if yogurt is available somewhere, bring it."

Then Prabhudas went. On the way he met an Ahirni (cowherd woman). He asked her, "Do you have yogurt?" Then she said, "The yogurt is sweet and beautiful. But what will you give me in return?" Then Prabhudas said, "Give me the yogurt. Whatever you ask, I will give you." Then the Ahirni said, "Give me one coin, and also say, will you give me liberation?" Then Prabhudas said, "Yes, here, take a coin, and I will also give you liberation."

Then the Ahirni said, “How can I believe you?” Then Prabhudas wrote on a paper: “In exchange for yogurt, liberation has been given.” Then the Ahirni tied it in her cloth and went to her home.

There she said to her neighbor, “Today, in exchange for yogurt, I have received liberation.” Then the neighbor said, “Oh foolish one, a vairagi has deceived you. How can he give you liberation?” Then Ahirni said, “Do not speak like this. He is a great Mahapurush. Truly he has given me liberation. He has written it on a paper. It is tied in my clothes. He will not speak falsely.”

Then the neighbor said, “Now it will be known.” Afterwards, within two days, Ahirni left her body. Then the messengers of Yama came. But just then the messengers of Vishnu arrived and said to the Yamadutas, “Leave her, we will give her liberation.”

Then the Yamadutas said, “She has not done any practice for liberation. How can she be liberated?” Then the Vishnudutas said, “She has been given liberation in exchange for yogurt by Prabhudas, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji. Therefore we will take her.” Then the Yamadutas went back. The Vishnudutas seated her on a celestial vehicle and took her.

Then she said, “My neighbor does not believe. Therefore please tell her.” Then they said, “The sevak of Shri Acharyaji gave her liberation in exchange for yogurt. Therefore we are taking her.” Then she (the neighbor) ran from her house to see, and that Ahirni was lying dead. Then that neighbor said to the people of Braj, “A note is tied in her cloth, see what it is.” Then they saw her cloth and found written: “In exchange for yogurt, liberation has been given.” Then she believed.

Then she also said, “I too will go to that Mahapurush and receive liberation.” Thus she too became a sevika of Shri Acharyaji and was fulfilled.

And here, Shri Acharyaji offered the yogurt as bhog. Then Shri Nathji said, “The yogurt is very sweet.” Afterwards, when they came out from the temple, Shri Acharyaji said, “Prabhudas brought very sweet and beautiful yogurt. Where did you get it?”

Then Prabhudas said, “Maharaj! It came at a great cost. I gave liberation in exchange for yogurt.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Why did you not give bhakti? Shri Thakurji accepts bhakti with love. Liberation is insignificant – why did you give that?” Then Prabhudas said, “Maharaj! She asked for liberation. If she had asked for bhakti, I

would have given bhakti."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for this is that day was Dana Ekadashi. On that day yogurt is especially needed. Therefore Shri Acharyaji said, "Today yogurt is necessary." And the greatness of Shri Acharyaji's sevak was shown – that he has the power to give both bhakti and mukti.

Varta 21 - Prabhudas Bhat

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Prabhudas Bhat, resident of Singhanand, the sentiment of his story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, he is Lalitaji's sakhi. Her name is "Kalahansi." Thus, in Singhanand he appeared in the home of a Bhat. Prabhudas's father would go before the Desadhipati (Ruler). He composed poetry for the Desadhipati. There was much wealth. When Prabhudas became ten years old, he became very foolish. His father educated him a lot, but he did not learn anything. Later, his father left his body. Afterwards, when Prabhudas became fifteen years old, he went to Delhi. There he went before the Desadhipati. Then the Desadhipati said, speak some poetry. Then Prabhudas said, what is called poetry? I do not know it. And I do not want anything from you. Thakur provides me with food. Tell me, will you maintain me? Then the Desadhipati said, drive him out of the village.

Then he, distressed, left Delhi. He came to Mathura and began to cry at Vishrant Ghat, saying, "O Lord, why have you made me a fool? Now where shall I go? Wherever I go, no one gives me respect or honor." In this way, he was absorbed in worry. At that time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu arrived in Mathura, at Vishrant Ghat. Then, recognizing him divinely, he said, "Prabhudas! Why are you crying? Bathe." Then Prabhudas bathed. Then Shri Acharyaji made him do name submission. Then Prabhudas received knowledge of his own true form and the form of Shri Acharyaji. At that time, bowing down, he spoke this couplet:

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" जब तें वछुरयोनाथ सो परचो जगत भव कूप । ता हत वल्लभ प्रगट है दरसायो नज रूप।"

"From the time I was separated from You, O Lord, the world seemed like a dark well of

worldly existence. For my benefit, Vallabh appeared and revealed His own form."

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Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji became very pleased. Then he said, “Prabhudas! This is your refuge. Now do Bhagavad seva.” Then Prabhudas said, “Maharaj! This is all your grace. Only through the strength of your promise have you accepted me. No one was more sorrowful than me. And in a moment you made me experience the ocean of joy. Now my prayer is that I may never have bad association, and that I may have firm faith at your lotus feet.” Then Shri Acharyaji, pleased, said, “Go, it shall be so.”

Later, in Mathura, a deity form was offered, and Lalji was brought. Then Shri Acharyaji performed the Panchamrit bath and placed it upon Prabhudas’s head. And being pleased, he said, “All traditions will be fulfilled for you directly. Therefore, quickly return to your village and do seva.” Then Prabhudas, bowing down, installed Shri Thakurji and returned to Singhanand. There he left his family members and, taking a separate house, began to do Bhagavad seva. He was not married.

Prasang 1 – Prabhudas’s Devotion to Seva

Prabhudas always served with constant love. At night he would gather with Vaishnavas. There was much wealth in his house. He used it in Bhagavad seva, Guru seva, and Vaishnav seva, leaving aside all worldly and Vedic matters. In this way he acted. Vaishnavas praised him, but his relatives criticized him. Yet he listened to no one. In this manner, he became old. Later, in his body there was negligence. Alertness was lost. Then all his relatives together brought him to the tirtha of Prithodak.

There, awareness returned. Opening his eyes, he saw that it was Prithodak tirtha. Then he said to all, “Why have you brought me here?” Then all his relatives said, “This is Prithodak tirtha. You were sick, so we brought you here.” Then Prabhudas said, “How will this Prithodak fulfill me? I am the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. If you keep me here for years, even then my body will not leave here. Therefore, take me back to Singhanand. I will have a darshan of Shri Thakurji’s lotus feet. There my body will leave.”

Thus spoke Prabhudas. But all the relatives did not agree. They kept Prabhudas at Prithodak for five to seven days. Then Prabhudas became well, able to walk and move about. His relatives, defeated, brought him home. Then Prabhudas bathed and prayed, “Maharaj! Shri Acharyaji placed You upon my head. But these foolish people, removing the refuge of Your lotus feet, made me take refuge in Prithodak. So why do you act in such a way that my body would leave

there?”

In this way, he prayed to Shri Thakurji, then placed Him upon the head of a Vaishnav in Singhanand. Bowing down, he came outside the temple, remembered the Lord along with all the Vaishnavas, and left his body. Then all the Vaishnavas of Singhanand, wherever they gathered to narrate Bhagavad stories, praised Prabhudas, saying, “Prabhudas is blessed, a great devotee of the Lord, who did not take refuge in tirtha but took refuge in Shri Thakurji.”

Now, in Singhanand, there was a certain Kirat Chaudhary.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): He was formerly Kansa’s washerman, whose clothes Shri Thakurji had looted in Mathura. This was his incarnation. That person came to the Vaishnavas and began criticizing, saying, “Prabhudas returned from Prithodak tirtha and left his body in Hidamb country. Why do you all praise him?” Then the village Chaudhary, being Vaishnav, remained silent. In this way he slandered for two to four days. One night, when he was sleeping, four beings came with clubs, overturned his cot, and threw him down. They began to beat him. Then Kirat Chaudhary said, “Why are you beating me? What wrong have I done to you?” Then those four were Vishnudoots. They said, “Why do you slander Prabhudas? Therefore, today we will shatter your bones, beating you.”

Then Kirat Chaudhary, terrified, rubbing his nose, said, “Now I will not slander Prabhudas, I will praise him. Do not kill me.” Then the Vishnudoots said, “Today we leave you. But if you ever slander again, we will not spare you.” Saying this, the Vishnudoots left.

The next day, when Vaishnavas were gathered praising Prabhudas, Kirat Chaudhary came there. Then all the Vaishnavas remained silent. Then Kirat Chaudhary said, “Vaishnavas! What you say is true. Prabhudas is a great devotee of the Lord. What need has he of tirtha? He has refuge in Shri Thakurji.” In this way he gave much praise. Then the Vaishnavas were astonished and asked, “Earlier you used to slander, and today you are praising greatly. What is the reason?” Then Kirat Chaudhary showed his back and said, “At night four came and beat me much, saying, ‘Why do you slander Prabhudas? He was a great devotee of the Lord.’ Therefore, you should happily praise him.” Then all the Vaishnavas became pleased and began to praise. Thus, Prabhudas was such a devotee of the Lord.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the story of Prabhudas this principle is shown—that a Pushtimargiya Vaishnav should not

take refuge in any tirtha. He should keep refuge only in Shri Acharyaji. And one who slanders a devotee of the Lord—he suffers in this world. When he dies, he goes to hell. Why? Because devotees of the Lord are dear to Him. He may tolerate offense against Himself, but He does not tolerate offense against His devotees.

Varta 22 - Purushottamdas, husband and wife

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Purushottamdas, husband and wife, both Kshatriyas, who lived at Rajghat in Agra, the sentiment of their story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): These Purushottamdas are, in the divine play, the intimate sakhi of Shri Chandravali. Purushottamdas's name is Madhavi, and his wife's name is Malati. They were born in the houses of two Kshatriyas at Rajghat in Agra. Between those two Kshatriyas there was great friendship. So both said, if our son and daughter are married, it will be good. Thus, both agreed. Then the marriage was performed. Within one year after that, the fathers of both passed away.

At that time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came to Agra. At that time Purushottamdas and his wife were sitting at the doorway. As soon as they saw Shri Acharyaji, both began speaking to each other, "Let us take refuge in him." So Purushottamdas quickly ran forward, bowed down at the feet of Shri Acharyaji, and made a request, "Maharaj! Please show mercy and take us in refuge. Please come to my home." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "You come to Adel. Receive your name from Shri Gusainji." Then Purushottamdas said, "Maharaj! What is the difference between Shri Gusainji and you? Therefore, please yourself make us your sevaks. What reliance is there on this body? Later, your darshan is difficult to obtain. In this way, by divine grace, knowledge of your true form arose in their heart."

Then Shri Acharyaji came to the house of Purushottamdas. He performed the ritual of offering names to Purushottamdas and his wife. Then Purushottamdas and his wife requested, "Maharaj! Now what is your command for us?" Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Perform Bhagavad Seva." Then Purushottamdas said, "Maharaj! Please grace us by installing Shri Thakurji, so we may serve him." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "A blemish will come upon your head. So, you go to bathe in the Ganga. Then when you come to Adel, we will install Shri Thakurji upon your head. Now both your mothers are alive. They are Asuric souls. They will cause affliction." Then Purushottamdas, along with his wife, said, "Our mothers show us much affection. How can affliction happen?" Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Until now you were not

Vaishnavs. That is why they love you. When they hear you have become Vaishnavs, then you will see. That is why we will quickly depart from here. We do not wish for conflict." Then Purushottamdas and his wife, being fearful, immediately performed whatever was necessary and bid farewell to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji, knowing conflict would arise, at once departed for Adel.

So Purushottamdas and his wife, being fearful, did not tell their mothers for three days that they had become Vaishnavs. They simply drank some milk daily. Then Purushottamdas's mother saw a mala (rosary) on his neck and said, "Son! Why is there a mala on your neck? For Kshatriyas, the sacred thread (janeu) is foremost. What is the meaning of this mala?" Then Purushottamdas said nothing. Then his mother lifted the veil from his wife's head and looked. She saw the mala and began to weep greatly, saying, "These husband and wife have both become renunciates." Afterwards, she went and told Purushottamdas's wife's mother, "Your daughter and my son both wear malas. Both have become renunciates. Now what should we do?" Then the other mother said, "Come, let us remove their malas, otherwise both will die."

So both came and said to the husband and wife, "Right now remove your malas, otherwise we will kill both of you." Then Purushottamdas called ten or twenty Kshatriya relatives and in front of all said to his mother, "This mala is tied to our heads. If the head goes, we do not care, but the mala we will never give up. What use do you have of this mala? If you wish, you may live with us. If you prefer, we will give you a separate house, and a servant will serve you. Whatever you desire, take it. Whatever we are able to do, we will serve you. If you wish, live in this house. We will live separately in another house. As you say, we will do it. Do not create conflict. But this mala we will never leave. And we will not take food and water touched by your hands. If you wear the mala and become Vaishnavs, then water from your hands will be acceptable."

Hearing this, both mothers became angry and said, "If you two have become renunciates, will you make us renunciates too? We raised you, and now you call us Chamars and Bhangis, saying you will not take water touched by us! We will both die because of you!" In this way, for five days they did not take water. All the relatives, even the village governor, came and tried to explain, but both did not agree.

That night, Purushottamdas and his wife slept. Then both mothers fell into the well in the house and left their bodies. In the morning, Purushottamdas performed their funeral rites. Then all the relatives

began saying, “You two are guilty of killing your mothers. Therefore, go bathe in the Ganga. Then we will accept you among us.” Then the husband and wife thought, “We must go to Shri Acharyaji and receive Bhagavad Seva.” So they departed.

They reached Prayag and bathed there. Afterwards they came to Adel, bowed down to Shri Acharyaji and Shri Gusainji, and told everything, “Maharaj! What you said has happened. Both our mothers have died. Now the conflict is gone. Please now install Bhagavad Seva.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “They both were Asuric souls. But since you have become Vaishnavs, their liberation will happen. In the family where there is a Vaishnav, that whole family is uplifted. Now you perform Bhagavad Seva.”

In Adel, there was an aged Brahmin of the Pujari lineage in whose house Shri Lalji resided. Shri Acharyaji said to him, “If you are unable to perform Puja, then give Shri Thakurji to us.” Then that Brahmin said, “I was already thinking to whom I should give Thakurji. Now I am unable to perform the Puja.” Then Shri Acharyaji gave Shri Thakurji a Panchamrit bath and installed him upon the head of Purushottamdas. For some days they remained in Adel, learning all the ways of Seva. Afterwards they were sent back to Agra.

There, they arranged cooking for the whole community and Brahmin feasts, thus removing worldly blame. The husband and wife both began performing Bhagavad Seva.

Prasang 1 – Shri Gusainji Visits Agra

One time Shri Gusainji came to Agra. He stayed at the house of Purushottamdas. At that time, Purushottamdas’s wife hid herself. Then Shri Gusainji asked Purushottamdas, “Where is your wife?” Purushottamdas replied, “Maharaj! Perhaps her sacred thread has broken.” Then Shri Gusainji thought, “She must be sitting separately.”

Afterwards, Shri Gusainji took a bath and himself cooked rice, five to seven kinds of vegetables, kheer, and everything. When the time came to roll out the bread, Purushottamdas’s wife came after bathing and sat down. Then Shri Gusainji asked, “Where were you until now?” She replied, “Maharaj! There was some work.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This was the fifth day of the period of restraint. That wife was hiding, thinking, “How can I show my face to Shri Gusainji without bathing?” Later she rolled out the bread. Shri Gusainji prepared the entire meal and offered it to Shri

Thakurji. Afterwards, the bhog was removed and the food distributed.

Then Purushottamdas and his wife said to Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! Please take your meal in this thali and bowl.” Shri Gusainji said, “How can I eat in the vessel of Shri Thakurji? I will eat on a leaf plate.” Then Purushottamdas said, “Maharaj! The food is not diminished. And the potters are not all dead. New vessels will come. Therefore, please eat in Shri Thakurji’s vessel.” In this way, saying such words, they made Shri Gusainji eat in the same vessel of Shri Thakurji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows the deep love they had for Shri Gusainji. And in the divine play, Shri Chandravali eats in the same vessel along with Shri Thakurji. So, this wife is the sakhi of Shri Chandravali. She brings to life all the pastimes. That is why they served Shri Gusainji food in the same vessel of Shri Thakurji. Also, the couple had so much affection for Shri Gusainji that they thought, “If we transfer the food into another vessel, the taste will be lost. All of it will become cold. And moving it again will delay the meal, which is not good.” Therefore, out of love, they served the food in the same vessel.

Afterwards, when Shri Gusainji sat to eat, the wife of Purushottamdas sat near him. She said, “Maharaj! Please eat this preparation.” Then Shri Gusainji said, “Whatever I want, I will take myself.” Then Purushottamdas’s wife said, “Maharaj! Just as you eat in the house of Nandarai, in the same way you should eat in the house of all Vaishnavas.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that in the house of Nandarai, the Lord eats according to the desires of the devotees. But here Shri Gusainji said, “I will take what I like.” So how will it be the same?

In this way she spoke lovingly with Shri Gusainji. Again and again she served him the entire meal and made Shri Gusainji pleased. Later, they made the bed of Shri Thakurji, with mattress and pillow, and placed Shri Gusainji to rest there. The couple began to serve his feet. Then Shri Gusainji said, “Get up now, both of you, and go take Mahaprasad.” Then Purushottamdas and his wife said, “Maharaj! We will take Mahaprasad daily.”

In this way, with new and fresh love every day, they kept Shri Gusainji with them for five to seven days. Every day there were new vessels, new bedding, and new clothes. Thus, both husband and wife were recipients of divine grace.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this story, the principle is established that their love for the Guru was even greater than for Shri Thakurji. In the same way, when a Vaishnav does this, then he attains the true fruit.

Varta 23 - Tripuradas Kayastha

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Tripuradas Kayastha, resident of Sergarh, the sentiment of his story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, he is an intimate sakhi of Shri Thakurji. Whenever there is any detail, message, or instruction to be given to the devotees, it is handed over through Harini. His eyes are large and wide. That is why in the divine play he is named Harini. So, in Sergarh, he took birth in the house of a Kayastha. His father was called the Diwan of a king, who looked after all the royal work. When Tripuradas was twelve years old, his father kept him close and taught him all the royal work.

One time, that king went to Agra to meet the governor of the land. Then, taking Tripuradas with him, he came to Agra. After staying in Agra for some days, the king, having taken leave of the governor, set out to return to his land. On the way, he came to Shri Govardhan for the darshan of Shri Govardhandhar. At that time, Tripuradas also came along with his father. They stayed in Gokul for three days. Then Tripuradas's mind became deeply attached to the form of Shrinathji.

On the fourth day, when the king prepared to depart, hearing this, Tripuradas was overcome with the fever of separation. He became restless. Then his father asked him, "Tripuradas, how are you?" Tripuradas replied, "My body will leave me if you take me away. Please, you remain here for two months and then go along with the king. I will have darshan once more and then return. Then my life will remain."

Then Tripuradas's father informed the king of everything, saying, "This is what my son says." Then the king said, "Why worry? Keep some men and horses with him. Later your son will come back." Then his father said, "Son, you remain here. Do not worry." Hearing this, Tripuradas was filled with joy. His fever left him.

Then his father, being pleased, gave him a palanquin and some men, saying, "Son, come quickly. I have grown old. I must look after the king's affairs." Tripuradas said, "You go, I will come soon." Then his father left with the king. On the way, a battle occurred with a landlord. Tripuradas's father was struck by a bullet and died. The king killed that landlord and proceeded further. Later, the king sent men to

Tripuradas to convey all the news.

Hearing it all, Tripuradas became pleased, saying, “It is good. Now I have no bondage. Now I will always take the darshan of Shri Govardhandhar.” Later, the funeral rites of his father were performed on the banks of the Manasi Ganga. He became purified. From then on, he would daily take darshan of the Lord.

Then one day Shri Acharyaji said to Tripuradas, “Who are you? For two months you have been taking darshan. Now go home.” Then Tripuradas said, “Maharaj, where can I go now? My mother died at my birth, now my father too has died, and I am not yet married. Now my mind is fixed in the form of Shrinathji. Where shall I go?”

Then Shri Acharyaji, seeing Tripuradas’s deep love, said, “I will arrange so that wherever you stay, you will receive darshan of Shrinathji. You will never be without Him, even for a moment.”

Then Tripuradas bowed down and prayed, “Maharaj, this is all I want. I cannot ask for anything else. I only need daily support for living, and without the darshan of Shrinathji I cannot live. This is my only concern. By your grace, whatever order you give, that I shall follow.”

Then Shri Acharyaji offered Tripuradas’s name in Havayi and gave him the Charanamrit Mahaprasad of Shrinathji. From then on, before his eyes, he would receive the darshan of the form of Shrinathji. Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Now you may go from here. Wherever you stay, the Lord will give you darshan. But never turn your back on Shri Thakurji.”

Then Tripuradas, bowing to Shri Acharyaji, took leave and went. From that day, he made a vow that without taking the Charanamrit Mahaprasad of Shrinathji, he would not drink water. With this firm resolve in his heart, he returned home.

Prasang 1 – Tripuradas’s Deep Devotion to Shrinathji

So, Tripuradas had great affection for Shrinathji. He would never turn his back to Shrinathji. Without taking the Charanamrit Mahaprasad of Shrinathji, he would not even drink water. Tripuradas worked in the service of a Turk. That Turk once sent Tripurdas to a pargana (administrative unit). There he earned a lot. Whenever any new things came—grain, vegetables, fruits, flowers, clothes—first they were offered to Shrinathji. Only afterwards would he take something for

himself. And whether Tripuradas sat, stood, or walked, he never turned his back to Shrinathji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): It is said that to forget the form of Shrinathji itself is to turn one's back. Therefore, he always did all his work while beholding darshan. And year after year, he would send good daglas (quilts) to Shrinathji. First, Shri Gusainji would look at Tripuradas's good quilts and have them accepted.

Once, that Mlechchh (Turk) took account from Tripuradas. Some amount came out to be due upon Tripuradas. He demanded it from him. Then Tripuradas said, "I do not have it now. I will earn and repay." Then that Turk looted the whole house of Tripuradas. He put Tripuradas in prison.

It was midnight. Then four beings came and threw that Turk upside down from his cot and began to beat him with clubs. Then that Turk said, "Why are you beating me? What harm have I done to you?" Then the Vishnudoots said, "Why did you imprison Tripuradas? We will smash and break your bones." Then that Turk, terrified, rubbed his nose on the ground and said, "I will go right now and release Tripuradas. Do not kill me." Then the Vishnudoots went away.

Then that Turk went to Tripuradas and said, "Go home." Tripuradas replied, "Now the night has passed much. I will go in the morning." Then that Turk said, "Will anyone take away your life? You must go at once." Then Tripuradas went home.

At that very time, the Bhaitiya (messenger) of Shrinathji came. He gave the Charanamrit Mahaprasad to Tripuradas. Then Tripuradas thought to himself, "Every year I send quilts to Shrinathji, but now I have nothing with me." Then there was one inkpot for writing, on the seal of which there was a form. He sold it, and with the money brought a roll of red coarse cloth, and gave it to the Bhandari, saying, "Do not tell Shri Gusainji. Place it in the store of Shrinathji. What else can I do? Now I am not capable of anything."

So the Bhaitiya placed that red cloth in the store of Shrinathji. Later, on the day of Prabodhini, Shri Gusainji, after setting the canopy and performing Devoththapan, placed a quilt on Shrinathji. Then Shrinathji said, "I feel very cold." Then another quilt was placed. Again Shrinathji said, "My cold has not gone, I still feel very cold." Then Shri Gusainji put another stove in the room, placed another quilt and even a blanket on top. Still Shrinathji said, "I feel very cold."

Then Shri Gusainji thought, “That quilt of the Vaishnav has come, but has not yet been accepted. Because of that, he feels cold.” Then Shri Gusainji called the Bhandari and asked, “Which quilts have come from which Vaishnavs? Recite their names.” The Bhandari recited them. Then Shri Gusainji said, “But Tripuradas’s quilt, which comes every year, has not been mentioned.” Then the Bhandari said, “Maharaj! Tripuradas is in difficulty for wealth. So his quilt has not come. Only one roll of red coarse cloth has come. It lies mixed in the store.”

Then Shri Gusainji said, “Quickly bring that red cloth of Tripuradas.” Bhandari brought it. Then Shri Gusainji said to the tailor, “Quickly stitch a quilt from it.” So the tailor stitched the quilt and prepared it. Then Shri Gusainji placed that quilt upon Shrinathji. Then Shrinathji said, “Now my cold has gone, I feel warmth.”

So in the winter season, five to ten times, He accepted that quilt and showed His devotee-controlled nature. Tripuradas came to know of this. Then, overjoyed, he sang this pada, in the raga Asavari Navrang:

✿✿✿

(राग आसावरी | Raga Asavari)

ललन बहारी मेरो कहे, जाड़ो मो ह अ धक सुहाय। पहे र कँवाइ औ ढ लई फरगुल, तोहू सीत सतावत आय ॥१॥

Lalan Bihari, my Lord, says, cold is very pleasing to me. Wearing quilted clothes and

covering with a fur blanket, still the cold afflicts You too.

अचरज भये सु न वल्लभ-नंदन कनक अँगीठी धरी मेंगाय । पु न िजय सो च मँगाई उढाई भिज गई सीत हंसे

जदुराय ॥२॥

Amazement arose hearing this, O son of Vallabh, who placed a golden stove and made

warmth. Then again, thinking in his heart, he fetched and covered You, the cold fled, and

Yadunandan laughed.

ऐसे परम कृपाल दया न ध बसरत नहीं सु ध करत सहाय। " त्रपुरारी” ग रधारी की बातें, कहा

जाने कोउ देह बताय

॥३॥

Such a supremely merciful ocean of compassion, who never forgets, always

remembering and giving help. “Tripurari” speaks of Giridhari’s matters—who can know

them or describe them with body and speech?

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that whatever object belongs to My devotee, that I accept in this way. So the acceptance is of the devotion and feeling, not of the object itself.

Prasang 2 – The Firm Determination of Tripuradas

And once, Tripuradas went to Attock with the Turuk. One day in the morning, the cook said, “Today, there is no Charanamrit Mahaprasad of Shrinathji.” Then Tripuradas said, “Why did you not tell me earlier? I would have arranged more.” Afterwards the cook said, “You prepare the meal, offer the Bhog, and you yourself go to deliver it. Do not call me.” Saying this, Tripuradas resolved in his mind, “As long as this body lasts, I will do all tasks, but without the Charanamrit Mahaprasad, I will not even take water.” With this firm determination, he went to court.

Then Shri Govardhandhar, taking the form of a ten-year-old boy, came carrying three small bags. In one bag was the Mahaprasad of Shrinathji, in one bag the Charanamrit of Shrinathji, and in one bag the Charanamrit of Shri Acharyaji. He gave this to the cook and said, “These bags of Charanamrit and Mahaprasad have been sent by Tripuradas. And he said, "When you go to Shrinathji, then please call me.” Then the cook kept those bags aside. After that, the boy vanished.

Later, when the cook completed the meal and offered the Bhog to Shrinathji, he sent a man from the court to call Tripuradas. That man went and spoke to Tripuradas. Then Tripuradas said, “I had already told you that I will not come. You go and offer it. Do not wait for me.” Then that man went back and told the cook that Tripuradas will not come, you should go ahead and offer it. Then the cook said, “You go once again and tell Tripuradas — you had sent the bags of Charanamrit Mahaprasad with the boy and said, ‘Call me.’ Now why are you not coming?”

Then that man again went and said this. Then Tripuradas returned from the court to his home and said to the cook, “Why did you call me? I will not take even water without the Charanamrit Mahaprasad.” Then the cook said, “You yourself had sent the bags of Charanamrit Mahaprasad through the boy and said, ‘Call me.’ Now why do you speak in this way? See, the three bags are all here.”

Then Tripuradas looked at them and asked, “Where is that boy?” The cook said, “The boy gave the bags and left. How do I know where he is?” Then Tripuradas thought within himself, “I caused Shri Thakurji a great labor. From now on, I will not insist upon anything.” He felt

great sorrow in his heart. Such is Tripuradas, a true devotee of the Lord. The story of Tripuradas has no end. How much of it can be told?

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): So Shri Thakurji gave the bags to the cook, but did not let Tripuradas know of it, because if Tripuradas were to see Him in the form of the boy, then much distress would come to him. And Tripuradas already experiences the divine form (svarup) of the Lord at all times, day and night. That is why Shri Thakurji did not reveal it to him. And since the cook was an ordinary Vaishnav, therefore Shri Thakurji assumed the form of a boy and made him experience His divine form in this way.

In this story, the principle is shown that Tripuradas have deep attachment to the divine form (svarupasakti). He always remains before Shri Thakurji. And the Charanamrit is revealed as part of that divine form — if any Vaishnav keeps a vow and determination regarding Charanamrit, then Shri Thakurji becomes pleased with it. But if such a vow causes sorrow by bringing labor or burden to the Lord, then that belongs to the path of Maryada (the way of rules and limits). In Pushtimarg, it is not pleasing for the Lord to take labor for the sake of the devotee's worldly matters. Why? Because in Pushtimarg, the devotee keeps no desire from the Lord for their own happiness. Even if sorrow comes, it is accepted as the experience of the body, and borne as such.

That is why when Tripuradas was imprisoned, he did not feel worry in his heart. Then the Vishnudutas came, punished Turuk, and released him. In this way, the Lord revealed His quality of being Bhaktavatsal (loving and protective towards His devotees). And when Tripuradas used to send very beautiful woolen blankets year after year, those the Lord did not accept, because they were sent out of material formality. But when Tripuradas, colored with love in separation (viraha-preeti), sent something, then being overcome by that love, the Lord accepted it.

From this, it is shown that if a Vaishnav feels hesitation in offering wealth, it is because the Lord Himself wishes to bestow His grace. And when there is much wealth, the Lord accepts it only when it is offered in connection with the Vaishnav, with love. Why? Because when year after year Tripuradas sent those fine blankets, it brought him anxiety from hesitation — if the materials are there but not used for service, then from where will the burning of anxiety come? That is why, when a devotee is divinely destined for service, then both wealth and even hesitation become part of it. This was shown.

Therefore, the story of Tripuradas has no end. He kept all these feelings hidden in his heart, never revealing them before anyone. That is why the divine form (svarup seva) was not outwardly manifest. Inwardly, within his mind, he remained absorbed day and night. He experienced only the joy of union (samyog rasa). Even in the divine play (lila), his experience was of the rasa of union. He is a sakhi related to Shri Thakurji.

Varta 24 - Puranmal Jeval

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Puranmal Jeval Kshatriya, who lived in Ambalaya, the sentiment of his story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, he is the sakhi of Lalitaji. His name is Chitralekha. He arranges the groves of Shri Swaminiji and creates various kinds of paintings there. So, in Angalaya, he was born in the house of a Kshatriya. Puranmal's father served as a soldier carrying weapons. And Puranmal associated with a jeweler. He learned the skill of gems. When Puranmal was twenty years old, his mother and father passed away. Puranmal was married, but the wife he got was ordinary. And Puranmal's mind was in God from childhood itself. So he listened to stories and discourses wherever possible. He followed the ways of discipline. His wife's mind did not turn towards Thakurji. Then he made a separate place in his house. He gave her four rupees per month. There was much wealth, so he would send his wife's expenses in the hands of another person. He himself did not speak much. His detachment was also firm.

Prasang 1 – The Dream Command for the Temple of Shri

Govardhan

So, Puranmal had much wealth tied up. One time, at night, considering Puranmal to be a divine soul, Shri Govardhandhar said in a dream, "In Braj, there is the Govardhan mountain. There I have manifested. So you come and construct my temple. And become the sevak of Shri Acharyaji." Then Puranmal awoke and in the morning gathered all his wealth and went to Braj for the darshan of Govardhan. Then he asked Ramdas Bhitariya, saying, "Shrinathji has given me the command to construct the temple, so I have come." Then Ramdas, Saddu Pande, and others said, "Shrinathji is the Thakur of Shri Acharyaji. Now, within two or four days, Shri Acharyaji will arrive. Then ask him, and if he gives permission, then construct the temple." Later Shri Acharyaji arrived. Then Puranmal did dandvat (prostration) and made a request, "Maharaj! Please make me your sevak. And Shrinathji has given the command to construct the temple.

So if you give your command, then I will construct it."

Then Shri Acharyaji told Puranmal to write down his name in offering and said, "Call artisans from Agra." So, Puranmal called artisans. Then Shri Acharyaji told them, "Bring the plan of the temple." Then the artisan made the plan of a temple with a dome, flag, and kalash. Then Shri Acharyaji told the artisan, "For our Thakur, the temple should not have a dome, flag, and kalash. Make it like the house of Nandarai." Then the artisan made it the second time like a house. When the paper plan came to the hands of Shri Acharyaji, it again had a dome, flag, and kalash. Then Shri Acharyaji asked, "Why did you make it with a dome?" Then the artisan said, "Maharaj! We had made it like a house. Now, why it came with a dome, flag, and kalash, that we do not know." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "We are sitting here. Make the plan in front of us." Then the artisan, exactly as Shri Acharyaji said, made it like a house. When the plan was ready, again it came with a dome, flag, kalash, and chakra. Then Shri Acharyaji understood that this was the wish of Shri Thakurji – that he be worshiped in the world and many souls be uplifted. So, it is proper to keep the form of a temple here.

Then Shri Acharyaji asked Girirajji, "Prabhu! The desire is to build a temple on you. When the temple is built, then by worldly ways much strain will come upon you." Then Govardhanji said, "For me it is supreme bliss. Upon me, for my Lord, whatever is done, I am pleased with it. Therefore, with joy, make the temple in all worldly ways. It will not cause me any sorrow."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): That is why later Shri Gusainji also allowed Vaishnavas to climb Govardhan for darshan in service. And without material, without seva, permission to climb was not given. Then Shri Acharyaji gave the order to Puranmal, "Quickly construct the temple." So, the foundation of the temple was dug. When the foundation was filled, Puranmal's wealth was all spent. Then Puranmal went to earn.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this wealth getting finished is that this wealth was earned by Puranmal's father. When the father dies, the son inherits the authority. Thus, knowing the authority of Puranmal, Shrinath accepted him. But as the wealth had been earned with worldly motives by the father, therefore the work was not accomplished. And if with this wealth the temple was built, then Puranmal's seva would not be established in perfection. Therefore, the wealth was spent. Then Puranmal went to earn for the purpose of temple seva. Here it is shown that when a Vaishnav does

business, it should be with the motive of Bhagavad seva, Guru seva, and Vaishnav seva. Only then does wealth become siddha seva.

Later, when Puranmal went, other Vaishnavs of royal means said, “If there is permission, we will construct the temple.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Puranmal will come and construct.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is that the Lord had given the command to Puranmal to construct the temple. So, it was destined to fulfill Puranmal’s wish.

After that, Puranmal, by his skill in jewels, earned much within a few days and returned.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown to Vaishnavs that if one undertakes business with seva-related wishes, and if the work is not destined to be fulfilled, then even the business will not succeed. Therefore, Vaishnavs should accept all as the wish of the Lord. They should not be elated or sorrowful. Whatever the Lord desires to do will be fulfilled naturally.

So, bringing the wealth, Puranmal returned. He completed the temple. Then Shri Acharyaji, after seeing a good muhurta, installed Shri Govardhandhar in the temple. On the day of Akshaya Tritiya. Then Puranmal spent much wealth. Ornaments, garments, materials, offerings, etc. Then Shri Acharyaji was pleased and said to Puranmal, “Whatever wish you have, do not keep it hidden. Do it all.” Then Puranmal prayed to Shri Acharyaji, “Maharajadhiraj! My wish is that with my own hand I may apply the most fragrant argaja (sandal paste) upon the body of Shri Anga.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Happily do your wish.” Then Puranmal prepared the most fragrant argaja and applied it upon the entire body. He experienced great bliss. Then Shri Acharyaji covered Puranmal with the prasadi upper garment of Shri Anga. Afterwards, much wealth remained. That Puranmal offered as gift to Shri Acharyaji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Puranmal’s wish was thus fulfilled. In the divine play, the sakhi “Chitralekha” realized her own true form. Then, knowing Shri Acharyaji was pleased, he thought in his heart, “The temple that I constructed is also seva in the divine play, decorating the kunj. But Shri Acharyaji is the very form of Shri Swaminiji. By his grace, I have performed some seva of Shri Anga.” The service of applying argaja is offered by Shri Swaminiji herself to the Lord at the time of union. And at the time of separation, Lalitaji offers it to Shri Thakurji. Why so? Because argaja is related to the

sentiment of Shri Swaminiji's body. So, without the grace of Shri Swaminiji, how can such seva be attained? Thus, by the pleasure of Shri Acharyaji, Puranmal's wish was fulfilled. And Shri Acharyaji covered him with his own prasadi upper cloth. By that, the entire body of Puranmal became suitable for divine mental seva. Therefore, Puranmal did not establish worldly seva, but became absorbed in mental seva. In constructing the temple, the seva by wealth was perfected. Here it is shown that, with bhav (devotional sentiment), even one seva gives fruit. Once he applied argaja with his body. With wealth, he constructed the temple. Therefore, those who do bodily or financial seva for their entire life without bhav, do not attain the fruit of mental seva. But with love, in one act, he attained the fruit. Thus, love is shown as the highest that brings perfection.

Later, year after year, Shri Gusainji sent prasadi dagla (woolen coats) to Puranmal.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): That dagla is the very form of Shri Govardhan. It personally came to Puranmal. In Puranmal's heart there was unfathomable devotion. He remained absorbed in the divine play at all times. That is why the sentiment of his story is described here. Such was the devoted Puranmal, for whom Shrinathji himself, by his own divine power, gave darshan at home and gave the command to construct the temple.

Varta 25 - Jadavendra Das Kumhar

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Jadavendra Das Kumhar, resident of Mahavan, the sentiment of his story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, he was Nandaraya Ji's cow. Among them, he was Bijaar. His name is called "Madonmata" by everyone. No other Bijaar could go along with him. Shri Thakurji fed him a lot. He was bathed in the waters of Yamunaji. So, in Mahavan, he was born in the home of a potter. He used to bring clay pots to the house of Narayan Das Brahmachari. So Narayan Das, regarding him as divine, one day fed him Mahaprasad. Then the mind of Jadavendra Das became pure. So he said to Narayan Das, "Make me the sevak of Shri Acharyaji." Then Narayan Das said, "Your caste is of potters. If you leave the company of potters, then you can become a sevak." Then Jadavendra Das said, "This I have already held in my mind before—that from today onwards I will not eat food nor drink water from the hands of my parents. I will only take from the hands of the Vaishnavas of Shri Acharyaji. But now I will not see the face of my own home." Hearing this, Narayan Das became pleased and said, "You live in my house. When Shri Acharyaji comes, then you become sevak." So he lived in the house of Narayan Das, bringing loads of wood and straw. Later Shri Acharyaji came to Mahavan. Then he stayed at Narayan Das's house. Then Narayan Das, considering this, made Jadavendra Das a sevak. Afterwards, he truly became the sevak of Shri Acharyaji.

Prasang 1 – Jadavendra Das' Service in Journeys

So Jadavendra Das was the supremely blessed devotee of Shri Acharyaji. When Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu and Shri Gusainji themselves traveled abroad, then he also stayed with them in foreign lands. Then Jadavendra Das would carry only so much: one canopy, one cot, provisions for two to four days, one small trunk. And when Vaishnavas walked along the road, he would reach the destination and do all the arrangements for their stay. At night he would keep watch, guarding the camp. Such was the service he did.

Prasang 2 – Digging the Foundation for Shri Gusainji's Mandir

And once Shri Gusainji was in Gokul. One night, when about one and a half watches of the night had passed, it was the day of Phagun Vad 7. At that time Shri Gusainji said from his own mouth, "If at this time the foundation of the temple is dug, then it will be well established and strong. This is such a favorable moment." Saying this, he himself lay down to rest.

Then Jadavendra Das immediately dug the foundation. By the second watch, he had dug it all and made a heap of the soil. Later, when Shri Gusainji awoke, he saw it and asked, "How has this soil come here?" Then the Vaishnavas said, "Jadavendra Das has dug it all." Then Shri Gusainji asked Jadavendra Das, "Did you dig this?" Then Jadavendra Das replied, "Yes, as you said from your own mouth, I dug the temple foundation at that very time." Afterwards, masons and craftsmen filled the foundation in a month—it had been dug so deep. Such strength he had. Later the temple was built, and Shri Navneetpriyaji and others were enshrined. Shri Gusainji became very pleased with Jadavendra Das.

Prasang 3 – Bringing Water for Shrinathji's Service

And once, at the gate of Shrinathji, he himself dug a well near Rudrakund so that soil could be baked and made strong. But the water that came out was salty. Then Jadavendra Das went to Ganga Ji. There he went with his own hands into the water of Ganga Ji to perform tarpan. And he prayed, "Please make this water sweet." When the water indeed became sweet, then he returned.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for this is that in the whole world, the water of Ganga is the most excellent and without defects. Therefore, in the service of Shrinathji, flawless substances should be used. For this reason he went to Ganga Ji. Thus, Jadavendra Das was such a blessed devotee and recipient of Shri Acharyaji's grace.

His story should be told up to this point.

Varta 26 - Gusain Das Saraswat

Now about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Gusain Das Saraswat, who lived in Mathura, the sentiment of his story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, he is the parrot of the Kadamba tree near Govindkund by Giriraj. When Shri Thakurji played the flute, then he would drink the nectar of that sound and of His lips. So this Gusain Das was born in the house of a Saraswat Brahmin in the East. When he was fourteen years old, he heard the recitation of Shri Bhagavat and the Bhagavad Gita from the mouth of a Brahmin. He became detached and started going on pilgrimages. Continuing pilgrimage, he reached the age of twenty-four. Then he arrived at Mathura.

At Vishrant Ghat, Shri Acharyaji was performing sandhyavandan. Seeing Him, Gusain Das thought in his mind, "I have done a lot of pilgrimage alone. But now I should take His refuge." Then he prayed to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! Please make me a sevak." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Your mind is fixed on doing pilgrimage, so how will you serve as a sevak?" Then Gusain Das said, "Maharaj! Whatever you command, I will do. Now I am tired of doing pilgrimages. Now I will stay in one place in Mathura." Then Shri Acharyaji had him perform the offering of his name, and afterwards said, "Do Bhagavad-seva." Then he said, "Maharaj! Please seat Shri Thakurji with me, I will do His seva."

So with a vairagi there was the form of Shri Thakurji, Chaturbhuj Shyam Swaroop. That vairagi gave his swaroop to Shri Acharyaji and went to Dwarika. Then Shri Acharyaji, after giving Him a Panchamrit bath, seated Him on the forehead of Gusain Das.

Prasang 1 – Transfer of Seva to Another Vaishnav

So Gusain Das took a house in Mathura and began to do seva there. Then Shri Thakurji began to show affection to Gusain Das. One Vaishnav used to come daily to Gusain Das's house to have darshan of Shri Thakurji. In his mind, Vaishnav prayed to Shri Thakurji,

“Maharaj! Please come to my forehead, then I will serve you.” In this way he made daily prayer in his heart.

Then Gusain Das said to that Vaishnav, “If you stay with me, then you can do seva.” But that Vaishnav refused. In his heart he thought that this was the seva of one’s own independence, so he did not accept. Later, after some days, Shri Thakurji inspired Gusain Das. Then Gusain Das said to that Vaishnav, “Now you seat Shri Thakurji and do seva.” Then that Vaishnav said, “What will you do?” Then Gusain Das said, “I will go to Badrikashram. There my body will leave me.” Then that Vaishnav said, “Perhaps the body may not leave according to Bhagavan’s wish. If you return, then what? The ways of the Lord cannot be known.” Then Gusain Das said, “The Lord will not do so. And if perhaps I return, then I will stay at your door. Shri Thakurji is pleased with you. I will not seat Him, I will just take one darshan.” Then that Vaishnav seated Shri Thakurji and began to do seva well. And Gusain Das went to Badrikashram, where, through separation, he left his body. Thus Gusain Das was such a supremely blessed devotee, a recipient of Shri Acharyaji’s grace.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): After leaving his body, he became a parrot in the divine play. After some days, the news of the passing away of Gusain Das came to that Vaishnav. Then he said, “Shri Acharyaji’s Vaishnav does not speak false, he has left the body.” Afterwards, with a focused mind, he began to do seva.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Gusain Das did Bhagavad-seva for some days. Then he attained knowledge of his own swaroop. Then Shri Thakurji revealed to him, “Now you seat Me on the forehead of this Vaishnav and go to Badrikashram. There, through separation, you will leave the body and enter the divine play. Your sadhan (spiritual practice) is completed.” Then Gusain Das went.

And that Vaishnav was, in the divine play, the sakhi of Shri Chandrawali Ji. Her name was “Chatura.” She was born in the house of a Sonadhiya in Mathura. Her mother, father, and wife all died. He remained alone. He was a sevak of Shri Acharyaji. He had great burning zeal for Bhagavad-seva. Then one day, Shri Thakurji said to him in a dream, “Go daily to have darshan of Gusain Das’s Thakurji. Then Shri Thakurji will seat Himself on your forehead.”

So that Vaishnav daily came to the house of Gusain Das for darshan. Then Shri Thakurji, showing His grace, seated Himself there. Thus, in the end, whatever the original nature of the soul is, in that way the means become the fruit.

Varta 27 - Madhav Bhatt Karmiri

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Madhav Bhatt Karmiri, who lived in Kashmir. The sentiment of his story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Madhav Bhatt, in the divine play, is Yashodaji's maidservant. She is extremely clever. She prepares the bed for Shri Thakurji, brings water, and remains in the company of Kumari Radha's companions. Her name is "Ratna."

Prasang 1 – Madhav Bhatt's Devotion and Service

Madhav Bhatt was born in the house of a Brahmin in Kashmir. At first, Madhav Bhatt became a sevak of Keshav Bhatt. Keshav Bhatt used to deliver discourses in Kashmir. Once Keshav Bhatt came to meet Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was delivering the discourse on Shri Subodhiniji. Keshav Bhatt used to come to listen. Due to pride in his knowledge, he would sit on a high seat and listen to the discourse. But Madhav Bhatt listened attentively with the feeling of a sevak.

Later, when Shri Acharyaji finished the discourse, Madhav Bhatt would go and sit near Shri Acharyaji's Vaishnavas. He would listen to stories from their mouths. One day, Keshav Bhatt said to Madhav Bhatt: "I am giving discourses, yet you do not come to listen. Instead, why do you go and listen to humorous and playful stories?"

Then Madhav Bhatt said: "Compared to your discourses, I find the playful and humorous stories of Shri Acharyaji's sevaks more pleasing. That is why I go there." Hearing this from Madhav Bhatt, Keshav Bhatt thought in his mind: "Now he is of no use to me. Therefore, I will hand him over to Shri Acharyaji."

After a few days, Keshav Bhatt prepared to return home. He said to Shri Acharyaji: "I have heard your discourse. Therefore, I am presenting this Madhav Bhatt to you. He is of no use to me." Thus, Madhav Bhatt remained with Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Later, Keshav Bhatt departed.

Then one Vaishnav asked Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! Both Madhav Bhatt and Keshav Bhatt listened to the discourse from your mouth. Yet Madhav Bhatt attained understanding, and Keshav Bhatt did not.

What is the reason for this?”

Shri Acharyaji said: “Keshav Bhatt listened while sitting with pride, and thus did not gain understanding. But Madhav Bhatt listened attentively with the feeling of a sevak, and therefore he attained understanding.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that if one listens to a discourse with the feeling of a sevak, then it bears fruit. For one who is proud, even if he listens, no result comes. This is the teaching. Originally, Madhav Bhatt is connected to the divine play. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji’s words bore fruit for him. But Keshav Bhatt is not connected to the divine play. He follows the path of discipline (Maryada Marg). He is eligible for heaven and liberation. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji’s words did not bear fruit for him. Later, Keshav Bhatt departed to his country.

And Shri Acharyaji performed the name initiation for Madhav Bhatt. Then Madhav Bhatt humbly asked: “Maharaj! What is my duty now?” Shri Acharyaji said: “You must perform the service of the Lord.” Then Madhav Bhatt said: “Maharaj! The form of Lalaji has always been with my forefathers. That form has always remained with me. I perform service by offering tulsi, sandalwood, incense, lamp, and food, following the method of invocation, offering, and dismissal in the path of ritual worship. Now please command me how I should serve.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said: “Go, bring the form.” Then Madhav Bhatt went and brought it. Shri Acharyaji performed the Panchamrit bath for the image and placed it on Madhav Bhatt’s head. Madhav Bhatt, after learning the practices of the Path of Grace for a few days, took permission and returned to Kashmir. There, with love, he began to perform seva at his home. After some time, Shri Thakurji began to show affectionate presence to him.

Prasang 2 – Madhav Bhatt Revives a Child

In the village where Madhav Bhatt lived, there was a wealthy householder. He had a son who died. Then that householder, in great grief, began to lament and said: “If someone brings him back to life, then I shall live. Otherwise, I will die with him.” In this way he spoke, falling down repeatedly, rolling on the ground.

Then one Vaishnav came near. Seeing the state of that householder, he said: “How can such sorrow exist in a village where a devotee like Madhav Bhatt lives?” Hearing this, the householder went to Madhav

Bhatt. He bowed down and began to weep greatly. He said: “You are a great saint. My son has died. Please bring him back to life. Otherwise, I too will die with him.”

Seeing him so sorrowful, Madhav Bhatt felt compassion. He composed one shloka and placed it before Shri Thakur:

दयालोरसमथस्य दुःखायैव दयालुता। वश्चोद्धारणदक्षश्च शास्त्रेष्वेकस्य शोभना॥

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Its meaning is this – You are merciful. But how are you merciful? You show mercy to those without strength. Why so? Because the mark of true mercy is that it is expressed upon the sorrowful. That alone is true compassion. Such compassion is found only in you. And in saving the world, you alone are expert. In all the scriptures, only you are praised. Such compassion befits you; therefore, destroy this sorrow.

Hearing this shloka, Shri Thakurji said: “What is this matter? Since compassion has arisen in you, go tell him, ‘Your son lives.’” Then Madhav Bhatt went outside and said: “Your son lives.” But in the heart of that householder it did not enter, because no medicine had been given, only words were spoken. Just then, a person from the house came and said: “Your son lives, congratulations!” Then he ran to his house and saw – his son indeed lived. Rejoicing, he said: “Madhav Bhatt is a great devotee. At whose words alone, saying ‘live,’ the son lived.”

That night, Madhav Bhatt thought to himself: “This deed I have done is most improper. In the world, there are countless sorrowful and happy people. Therefore, it is not right to remain in this village any longer.” So, at midnight, he placed Shri Thakurji in a casket and departed. He came to Adel, to Shri Acharyaji.

This shows that a Vaishnav’s compassion must be considered carefully. If worldly glory is displayed, then it is proper to leave the village, otherwise later much sorrow comes. Therefore, to remain like an ordinary person is right. So that Shri Thakurji does not feel sorrow, and Vaishnavas also do not feel sorrow. Madhav Bhatt was all-powerful, yet he remained a sevak. Thus, he acted considering the welfare of the Vaishnavas.

Prasang 3 – Writing Shri Subodhiniji

Madhav Bhatt had great practice in writing. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu composed the commentary on Shri Bhagavat, Shri

Subodhiniji. Madhav Bhatt was writing it down. Wherever Madhav Bhatt did not understand, there he would stop writing and sit. Then Shri Acharyaji would explain to him, and then he would write. And Madhav Bhatt would sit before Shri Acharyaji in such a way that his feet were not visible.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why so? The scriptures say – before elders one should not sit on an equal seat. And one should sit in such a way that one's feet are not seen. Thus he sat with the feeling of a sevak.

Prasang 4 – Madhav Bhatt's Passing

Once, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was abroad. Madhav Bhatt was with him, writing Shri Subodhiniji. One night, in the late hours, Madhav Bhatt arose due to a minor need. Then thieves shot an arrow. It struck Madhav Bhatt. At once, he took the name of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Uttering the name, Madhav Bhatt's body was left. Then the Vaishnavas performed his funeral rites.

Later, one Vaishnav prayed to Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! How is it that a devotee like Madhav Bhatt should die in such a way?" Shri Acharyaji said with his own mouth: "There is no harm in Madhav Bhatt's afterlife. But he had once committed a slight offense towards the Lord. For that he received punishment."

Then the Vaishnav asked: "Maharaj! What offense did he commit?" Shri Acharyaji said: "Formerly, Madhav Bhatt used to spread the Lord's bed with flowers. One day, a needle was accidentally left among the flowers. Madhav Bhatt did not notice. That needle touched the sacred body of Shri Thakurji. From that offense this has happened. Yet, with great care, while taking the Lord's name, he left his body. Therefore, nothing obstructs him. He has attained the lotus feet of Shrinathji. Now nothing remains to be done."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): From this it is shown that in the Path of Grace, Shri Acharyaji did not establish the practice of making a bed of flowers. Why? Because these are worldly flowers. Their stems are hard, they wither in a moment, and stain the cloth. Therefore, one should place flowers separately, so that only fragrance may come to the Lord. In the divine play, however, flowers are of the nature of forms, supremely delicate. Thus there a bed of flowers is made.

But Madhav Bhatt, leaving Shri Acharyaji's discipline, considered the description of the bed of flowers in the divine play, and so spread flowers. This did not please the Lord. Thus a needle was left behind. Madhav Bhatt was punished, and thereby all Vaishnavas were given instruction – that in the Path of Grace, the practices revealed by Shri Acharyaji and the commands given in the scriptures should be

followed exactly. If one acts according to one's own imagination, even though there may be descriptions in the divine play, it does not please Shri Govardhandhar.

Although earlier Madhav Bhatt worshipped Shri Thakurji according to the path of discipline, and in that tradition a bed of flowers is made, so also it was an offense. For that he was punished. Later he was accepted into the divine play. This shows – in the refuge of Shri Acharyaji, sins of many births are endured in this very birth, and later no obstacles remain. Such is the power of that refuge. Thus, enduring all offenses, one attains divine play. Here his body was given up, showing the power of refuge.

So, Madhav Bhatt left his body. Then Shri Acharyaji said: "Now Shri Subodhiniji remains. It was the Lord's wish that this much be revealed." Thus Madhav Bhatt's story is told until here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that Shri Thakurji had called him near. Twice before the command came, but Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu did not consent. Then, under the pretext of this offense, Madhav Bhatt was called the third time. Then Shri Acharyaji, composing the work "Antahkaran Prabodh," performed the play of disappearance. This too is a reason.

Varta 28 - Gopaldas Bansbada

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Gopaldas, resident of Bansbada, the sentiment of his story is described here –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Gopaldas is the sakhi of Shri Yamunaji. Her name is "Rasprakashika." In the divine play, she speaks such words to the devotees that the essence of rasa (divine bliss) becomes illuminated in everyone's heart.

So, Gopaldas took birth in the house of a Kshatriya in Bansbada. That Kshatriya followed the business occupation and also kept a jewelry shop. Four sons of that Kshatriya were born earlier but they died. The fifth was Gopaldas. Then the Kshatriya made a vow, that if this son lives, then his mundan (first head-shaving ceremony) will be done at Prayag, the king of pilgrimages.

So, when Gopaldas was five years old, the Kshatriya was very busy in his trade, and could not go to Prayag. Thus, while things went on like this, Gopaldas became eleven years old. Then the Kshatriya prepared a cart, sent his helper along with him, and said, "If you quickly return after getting Gopaldas's mundan done at Prayag, then his marriage will be arranged."

So in this way Gopaldas set out from Bansbada. Arriving at Prayag, he had darshan of Shri Ganga and Shri Yamuna. They were goddesses. He had a supernatural vision of them. Then Gopaldas said to the helper, "I will not have my mundan done here in the middle. I will go five kos outside this pilgrimage area and do it there. Will you throw me into hell? Shall I drop my hair in the middle of this water which is itself the form of rasa?"

Even though the helper tried to explain many times, saying, "This is your father's vow. And in Prayag, shaving the head brings great merit." Then Gopaldas said, "My father is foolish for making such a vow. And I do not want such merit. Brahmins say these things only to receive donations at the pilgrimage. I will never shave here."

So Gopaldas went five kos beyond Prayag, across the Ganga, and had his mundan done there. Afterwards he bathed and again came back to Prayag to bathe there too. He gave charity and merit. He worshipped Shri Yamunaji and Shri Gangaji with milk, arghya, garlands, and

sandalwood. He stayed there for five nights.

At that time, Shri Acharyaji also came to Prayag. Gopaldas used to daily worship the Triveni. On the fifth day, Shri Acharyaji Himself came to bathe near Gopaldas. Recognizing him as a divine soul, He came to bestow grace. At that time Gopaldas was bathing. Then Shri Acharyaji took a palmful of water from Triveni and poured it on Gopaldas.

At that moment, Gopaldas attained realization of his own true form and also realization of Shri Acharyaji's form. Then Gopaldas bathed his head again in the water. Folding both hands, he prayed to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! I am a great sinner, I have wandered in worldly births for so long. Now please have mercy on me."

Then Shri Acharyaji, seeing his humility, gave him initiation into the Path while still in the water. He established the principles of the Path in his heart, and told Gopaldas, "You should serve the Lord." Then Gopaldas came out of the water, put on clothes, while Shri Acharyaji also changed into fresh clothes after bathing, performed the midday rituals, and told Gopaldas, "Wherever you bring the Lord's form from Adel, come there." Saying this, He Himself went to Adel.

Afterwards, Gopaldas gave offerings to Lalji at Prayag and then came to Adel. There, Shri Acharyaji placed Shri Thakurji, having given Him a Panchamrit bath, on Gopaldas's head. Then for five days, Gopaldas stayed in Adel and learned all the practices of the Pushtimarg. Afterwards, taking leave of Shri Acharyaji, he returned home to Bansbada.

Then the helper told Gopaldas's father everything, "Your boy went five kos beyond Prayag across the Ganga and got his head shaved. We told him much, but he did not agree. And he has returned as a Vaishnav."

Then Gopaldas's father said, "What has happened is correct. Do not speak further." Because Gopaldas's parents had great affection for him, they feared he might leave home. So they said nothing to him.

Later, the parents said, "You must be hungry, eat something." Then Gopaldas said, "I will not even drink your water. If you become sevaks of Shri Acharyaji, then you will be mine. Otherwise, give me a little separate space to stay."

Then the father said, "You must get married, how will that happen?" Then Gopaldas said, "For now, let the world do as it does. Later,

whatever happens will be fine. Right now, marriage is not happening."

Then the father gave him a separate place in the house. There, Gopaldas made a special space, cooked for Shri Thakurji, offered bhog, and partook of Mahaprasad. Afterwards, he decorated a temple for Shri Thakurji and began service with love.

Later, his father arranged Gopaldas's engagement, and marriage also took place. But in the in-law's house, he did not accept water from anyone's hand. Afterwards, Gopaldas said to his father, "If you become a sevak of Shri Acharyaji, that will be good. Otherwise, I will make my wife a sevak." Then his parents said, "Take whatever wealth you want, but we will not become sevaks."

Then Gopaldas told his wife, "You should become a sevek. If you give up your parents' food and customs, then you will belong to me." Then his wife said, "I will become a sevak, but I will not give up my parents' food."

Then Gopaldas thought in his mind, "Let me at least make her Shri Acharyaji's sevika. If she becomes an elevated soul, then everything will naturally be accomplished."

So, placing his wife on the cart, he left from Bansbada and in some days reached Prayag. Then he came to Adel, bowed to Shri Acharyaji, and prayed, "Maharaj! My parents did not become sevaks, though I tried much. Now I have brought my wife with me. Please give her initiation with grace."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Your wife is not a Pushti soul. Therefore, do not insist on giving her initiation. She will eat anywhere, and will not stay firm. If you give her the Name, then through your connection, your parents and wife will be uplifted. But there will be no divine play relationship."

Then Gopaldas said, "Please, at least pronounce the Name." Then Shri Acharyaji gave the Name to Gopaldas's wife. Afterwards, Gopaldas stayed for some days with Shri Acharyaji, and then, taking leave, returned to Bansbada and began the service of the Lord.

Prasang 1 – Gopaldas Builds a Resting Place

So Gopaldas made a resting place near the door of his house, by the road, for those who traveled. Whoever came would stop there. Then Gopaldas thought, "In this village, there is no Vaishnav with whom I can talk about Bhagavad service and discourse. So, if a resting place is

made, then some Vaishnav may come, and I will get to meet them." With this wish in mind, he made the resting place.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): It was not called a dharmashala (charitable lodge), because dharmashalas are said to bring great punya (merit). And if the wish for punya is present, then for a Pushtimarg follower, that becomes an obstacle.

So, travelers walking the road would come there and stay. In the evening, Gopaldas went there. Whoever had arrived, he would ask them. If someone was hungry, he would give them food to eat. And if any Vaishnav came, he would take them to his house, lovingly offer them Mahaprasad, and keep them for two or four days. If they had no money, he gave them money for expenses.

In this way, one day Padmaraval, a Sanchora Brahmin, came by. So Gopaldas asked him, “Who are you? Where have you come from? Where will you go?” Then Padmaraval said, “I am a Sanchora Brahmin. I have love for the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. My patron, Mavji Patel, is in Ujjain. I take expenses from him and go to Dwarka for Shri Ranchhodji’s darshan. When the expenses are finished, I again return to Ujjain, take expenses from Mavji Patel, and go to Dwarka for darshan.”

Then Gopaldas, hearing these words of Padmaraval, understood him to be a divine soul and began a conversation: “The kind of attachment you have for Shri Ranchhodji, if that same attachment were to be in Shri Acharyaji, then your life’s purpose would be fulfilled.” Thinking this, Gopaldas asked Padmaraval, “Do you ever speak with Shri Ranchhodji? Do you converse with him?” Then Padmaraval said to Gopaldas, “Does Shri Ranchhodji speak with anyone? Does he converse? If he does, tell me.” Then Gopaldas said, “Near Prayag, in Adel, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu resides. That is Shri Ranchhodji himself, manifested. He speaks and converses with all.” Then Padmaraval said to Gopaldas, “Shall I go? Will I get darshan from Shri Ranchhodji there?”

Then Gopaldas said, “Just as Shri Ranchhodji gives darshan, in the same way Shri Acharyaji will give darshan to you. And he will speak with you.” Then Padmaraval became greatly eager, “When shall I go to Adel? When will Shri Acharyaji, in the form of Shri Ranchhodji, speak with me?” So Gopaldas came home. That night, Padmaraval could not sleep, saying, “When shall I go to Adel?” Early in the morning he got up and left. In a few days, he reached Ujjain. Then Mavji Patel asked Padmaraval, “Rawalji! This time you have come to Ujjain very quickly. And your mind looks unsettled. What is the reason?”

Then Padmaraval said, “In Adel, Shri Ranchhodji has manifested. He speaks and converses with all. So in the morning I will go to Adel.” Then Mavji Patel said, “Rawalji! I too will come with you. I will go for the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji.” Then Padmaraval said, “You are a royal man. We will walk on foot. With your group, horses and retinue, how will it be possible?” Then Mavji Patel said, “I will come alone with you on foot.” Then Padmaraval said, “Make preparations. In the morning we will go.” Then Mavji Patel came home and told his wife Birjo, “Tomorrow morning I will go with Padmaraval to Adel. There Shri Acharyaji, in the form of Shri Ranchhodji, is giving darshan and speaking with everyone.”

Then Birjo said, “I too will go with you.” Then Mavji Patel said, “How will you women go? I will walk on foot, without retinue or horses.” Then Birjo said, “I too will walk with you on foot.” Then Mavji Patel asked Padmaraval, “My wife says she will also come with us?” Then Padmaraval said, “How will she walk alone on foot?” Then Mavji said, “She says she will walk alone on foot.” Then Padmaraval said, “Then come quickly, all three of us will go.” Then Mavji Patel went home, made preparations, left someone to watch the house, and brought Birjo with him. So the three went to Adel.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why so? Because they were divine souls, just by hearing of Shri Acharyaji’s darshan, eagerness arose in their hearts. In the lila, Padmaraval belongs to Dwarka-lila, the sakhi of Shri Rukmini. Her name was “Vimala.” When Shri Thakurji once joked with Shri Rukmini, she fainted and fell down. Later Shri Thakurji comforted her. At that time this sakhi stood nearby. Her name was Vimala. She laughed. Then Rukmini became upset with Vimala, saying, “When I fainted and fell, why did you just stand there? When Shri Thakurji attended to me, why did you wish to? It is not my duty to be served by Shri Thakurji. It is right for me to serve him. What Shri Thakurji did was improper. If you had served me, why would Shri Thakurji have to?” This Rukmini said. But Vimala did not reply, she simply smiled silently. Then Rukmini angrily said, “Go, fall to the earth. Why are you my sakhi? You are of no use to me.” Thus, Vimala sakhi was reborn as Padmaraval. Therefore her attachment to the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji was very deep. The earlier connection was firm. Mavji Patel and Birjo were connected to Brajlila, being two sakhis of Shri Chandravali. In the lila, Mavji’s name is “Rupa,” and Birjo’s name is “Harkha.” Therefore they too developed attachment to Shri Gusainji in Brajlila.

So, along with four or five men, they came to Prayag. Then on the opposite bank of Adel, darshan was to be had. The three of them were

so eager that they wished to cross Shri Yamunaji quickly. At that very time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came to the bank of Shri Yamunaji for the midday sandhya. Then, seeing the great eagerness of Padmaraval, Mavji Patel, and Birjo on the other side, a Vaishnav said to them, “Take a boat quickly and bring Padmaraval, the Sanchora Brahmin, and Mavji Patel, and Birjo across. Tell them that Shri Ranchhodji has sent the boat. Come quickly.”

So Vaishnav went with the boat to the other side and asked, “Who are Padmaraval, Mavji Patel, and Birjo?” Then those three said, “These are our names.” Then the Vaishnav said, “Shri Ranchhodji has sent this boat for you. So sit quickly and come.”

Then those three became very joyful, saying, “Truly Shri Ranchhodji has manifested. We had no delay in arriving; he called us by name and sent a boat for us.” So, with great eagerness, they sat in the boat, came across, and had darshan of Shri Acharyaji.

Then Shri Acharyaji, knowing their bhav (sentiment) to be in Shri Ranchhodji, thought, “If I give them darshan in the form of Shri Ranchhodji, then their feeling will be strengthened.” So he gave darshan in the form of Shri Ranchhodji.

Then the three bowed down. Then Padmaraval prayed, “Maharaj! By the grace of Gopaldas we have had this darshan. Gopaldas told us, ‘You become sevak of Shri Acharyaji.’ So now, please accept the three of us. We take refuge in you.”

Then Shri Acharyaji bathed the three of them in Shri Yamunaji, performed their initiation with name-giving. Then the people who had come with Mavji Patel were also given names. Afterwards, Padmaraval was taken by Shri Acharyaji into his temple. After that, Shri Acharyaji went for his meal.

At that time, Padmaraval thought in his heart, “Just as Shri Ranchhodji is offered bhog, if I could see Shri Acharyaji eating, I would take the remains.” Shri Acharyaji knew this desire of Padmaraval’s heart, so he called him inside. Then Padmaraval saw Shri Acharyaji eating in the form of Shri Ranchhodji. So he was very pleased in his heart.

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Now is your doubt gone?” Then Padmaraval prayed, “Maharaj! We are lowly souls of little understanding. Still, again and again this thought came to my mind. You are truly Shri Ranchhodji himself.” Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji ate

and gave his remnants in a bowl to Padmaraval, and also gave remnants to Mavji Patel and Birjo. All three took Mahaprasad and came before Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu.

Then Padmaraval prayed, “Maharaj! Now what is your command for us?” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Do seva.” Then Padmaraval prayed, “Maharaj! Just as my mind is attached to your darshan, so that the same mind may remain constantly engaged in serving, then I will serve. Otherwise, I will not.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Your wish will be fulfilled by Shri Thakurji.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This means that you will attain Shri Ranchhodji in Dwarka-lila. So Shri Thakurji will fulfill your wish.

And he gave permission to the three of them, “We will come to Ujjain in a few days. There we will bring Shri Thakurji into your home. And we will establish seva on the head of Mavji Patel and Birjo. So you must serve. Now you three go home. We will also later come to Ujjain. Then your wish will be fulfilled.”

So Padmaraval, Mavji Patel, and Birjo bowed and departed. In a few days they came to Ujjain. Thus Gopaldas is such a devotee that, through his small association, Padmaraval, Mavji Patel, and Birjo all attained refuge in Shri Acharyaji. Therefore, much of Gopaldas’s story is told. One who has firm faith in Shri Acharyaji.

Varta 29 - Padmaraval Sanchora Brahmin

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Padmaraval Sanchora Brahmin of Ujjain, the sentiment of his story is described here –

Prasang 1 – Padmaraval Receives the Lord

This sevak came into being. The way it has already been said above, in the story of Gopaldas. Later Shri Acharyaji went to Ujjain. Then he stayed at Padmaraval's house. Gave his wife naam nivedan initiation. Later told Padmaraval, "Please bring the divine form of the Lord."

So, among Padmaraval's community, in the house of one Sanchora, there was the divine form of the Lord – Ashtabhujaji. Then Padmaraval said, "Please give me this Thakur." They said, "Take him away. We are not able to manage him. Twice a day bathing is not possible."

Then Padmaraval brought Shri Thakurji. Then Shri Acharyaji made him bathe with Panchamrit, seated him on a seat, and placed him on Padmaraval's head. Then Mauji Patel and Birjo made a request, "Maharaj! Place him on our head too, so that we may serve." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "On your head Shri Gusainji will place service."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why is this so? Because we have accepted you into our shelter, but all your desires will be fulfilled through Shri Gusainji.

Then Mauji Patel and Birjo bowed down, offered gifts, and went home. Then Padmaraval made a request, "Maharajadhiraj! I am foolish. I have not studied anything. I do not understand anything. And here, the Brahmins of our community are karma-bound Smartas. They trouble me, saying, 'What were you thinking becoming a sevak?'"

Then Shri Acharyaji gave Padmaraval prasadi sandal paste and charanamrit from his lotus feet. As soon as he placed it in his mouth, the knowledge of all the Vedas, Puranas, and scriptures arose within him. He began to give answers to great scholars. All the scholars, bowing their heads down, admitted defeat and left.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): And Shri Acharyaji gave prasadi sandal paste and charanamrit. The meaning of both these divine gifts is this: From sandal paste, all knowledge arises. If the overflowing rasa escapes outward, then either the body would leave, or one would be unable to remain without speaking of the divine lila in front of everyone. From charanamrit, the body becomes firm, devotion becomes firm, the rasa does not overflow outside but remains stable in the heart. Therefore, prasadi sandal paste and charanamrit were given.

Prasang 2 – Thakurji's Bed and Kheer Offering

Once, Padmaraval had a new bed made. Then Shri Thakurji said to Padmaraval, "The bed is small. I cannot lie down." Then Padmaraval happily had a larger bed made. Then Shri Thakurji began to sleep comfortably. In this way, he began to show intimacy.

And one day Padmaraval's wife offered hot kheer. Later she performed bhog ceremony and then arati. At that very time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu arrived. Then Shri Thakurji showed Shri Acharyaji his hands and lips, saying, "Padmaraval's wife has offered hot kheer. Because of this my hands and lips have become red." He said this to Shri Acharyaji, but did not say it to Padmaraval's wife.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why? Because the wife is an ordinary Vaishnav. Her liberation will happen through the power of surrender. But she is not related to lila.

Then Shri Acharyaji said to Padmaraval and Padmaraval's wife, "Why did you offer hot kheer to Shri Thakurji? Shri Thakurji's hands and lips have become red because of the hot kheer." Then Padmaraval said, "Maharaj! How would we know? Whatever food is good when hot, that is what we offer." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "For other food items, do not worry even if they are hot. But do not offer hot kheer. Dip your finger in it. When it feels suitable, then offer the bhog."

Then Padmaraval said, "Maharaj! If the kheer was hot, why did Shri Thakurji not make it cool? Why did he accept it hot?" Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Shri Thakurji is a child. A child is very fond of kheer, so first he puts his hands in the kheer. And if other food is hot, then he eats it later. Kheer he eats first, that is why do not offer kheer hot."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this way Shri Acharyaji explained to Padmaraval and his wife. He used the name of 'child.' But he did not reveal the inner form of kheer. Why? Because the wife

is not related to lila. Padmaraval is related to the royal lila of Dwarka. Therefore, to Padmaraval, Shri Thakurji revealed his experience. But he is not related to the lila of the Braj devotees. Therefore, kheer is the offering of the sentiment of Swaminiji. That is why kheer is very dear to Shri Thakurji. The sentiment of kheer has already been said above in Narayandas Brahmachari's story. That is why, seeing kheer, Shri Thakurji loses his patience. Therefore, kheer should be cooled and then offered. Everywhere it is written that kheer should be cooled before offering. For other food items, cooling is not mentioned. Just as Shri Acharyaji is very fond of kheer, in the same way Shri Gusainji is very fond of laddus. Shri Acharyaji loves the tender sentiment of cooled sakhdi and kheer. Similarly, Shri Gusainji loves many kinds of uncooled offerings. The Lord accepts them in a mature mood. But in Pushtimarg, the Vaishnavs experience according to the authority they possess.

Prasang 3 – Padmaraval's Journey to Dwarka and Divine

Instruction

And once Padmaraval went to Dwarkaji for the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. Then Shri Ranchhodji said in a dream, "In Rajnagar there is one of my sevaks. At his house you should go. There, cook food." Then Padmaraval said, "Maharaj! I do not know him. And without being invited, how can I go to someone's house?" Then Shri Ranchhodji said, "He himself will come to invite you." Later Padmaraval came to Rajnagar.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): From this it is understood that Padmaraval is related to the lila of Shri Ranchhodji. Therefore, he thought, "If I get absorbed in the Braj lila, it will slip from my hands." Therefore, it was said, "Go to the house of my sevak." Now, Padmaraval's mind's brother, if he were absorbed in Braj lila, would say, "He is your sevak." But since he is the sevak of Shri Acharyaji, it would not suit. Padmaraval has deep feelings towards Shri Ranchhodji. He recognized the form of Shri Acharyaji as Shri Ranchhodji. He did not recognize the relation of Braj lila. Therefore, in his house, Shri Thakurji revealed intimacy in the form of Shri Ranchhodji. And Padmaraval's son Krishna Bhatt will be born. He will be related to the lila of Shri Gusainji. Then Shri Thakurji will give Krishna Bhatt the divine experience. From this it is shown that each soul knows Shri Acharyaji according to its own capacity. To that extent, Shri Thakurji reveals experience! If one knew Shri Acharyaji as

the direct Purushottam, then Shri Govardhandhar would be revealed. If one knew Shri Acharyaji as the complete Purushottam, higher than Shri Govardhandhar, then the experience of Braj lila would arise. This principle is shown.

And Shri Ranchhodji, at night, said to his sevak, “Tomorrow Padmaraval will come from Rajnagar to your village. Bring him to your home and have him cook well.” Then that sevak said, “How will I recognize Padmaraval?” Then Shri Ranchhodji said, “Padmaraval is famous, you will know him.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): From this it is shown that both of you are related to me. Therefore, I will unite both of you.

Later Padmaraval in Rajnagar thought, “I do not know the sevak of Shri Ranchhodji. So I will find a way.” Then, with him was a student. To him he said, “You go to the village and beg for food grains from five to seven houses, separately. Keep them all separate.” Then that student went to the village and begged food grains from five to seven houses and brought them back. Then Padmaraval said to that student, “Return the food to the one from whom you begged it.” Then that student went to return the grains. Then that sevak of Ranchhodji said, “Why have you brought back the food that was begged?” Then the student said, “As my master commanded. He said, ‘Bring it,’ so I brought it. Now he said, ‘Return it,’ so I returned it.” Then he asked, “What is the name of your master?” Then the student said, “Padmaraval!” Then he took back the food. Later, with that student, he went to Padmaraval. He said, “Rawalji! Please come to our home. Cook food.” Then Padmaraval said, “I do not go to anyone’s house.” Then that sevak of Shri Ranchhodji said, “I have the order of Shri Ranchhodji, that Padmaraval should cook food in my house. Therefore, I have come to invite you. He has ordered me, so surely you also must have received the order. You too are the recipient of the grace of Shri Ranchhodji. That is why I say this.” Then Padmaraval became very pleased and said, “Yes, I too have the order of Shri Ranchhodji. So let us go.” Then he went to that house, cooked food, offered bhog, and gave the mahaprasad to that sevak as well.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): It was not taken directly from his hand, because he was a Baniya. Therefore, both of them took the mahaprasad. The student brought the mahaprasad. Later, at night, they stayed at his house. Both of them narrated the stories of Shri Ranchhodji and became pleased. In one sentiment they were united. Their happiness arose.

Later in the morning Padmaraval prepared to leave. Then that sevak said, “Stay for a few days.” Then Padmaraval said, “I cannot stay. I have great eagerness for the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji.” Saying this, that sevak of Shri Ranchhodji bid him farewell. Padmaraval went to Dwarka.

Prasang 4 – The Roti Offering

Again, one day, much flour was obtained and little ghee. Then Padmaraval made rotis of all the flour. As much as could be spread with ghee, he spread with ghee. The rest he placed without ghee. He placed them on the plate and offered bhog. And he made this request, “Maharaj! Please eat the rotis with ghee. Let the rotis without ghee remain dry. Do not eat them.” Then Shri Thakurji ate all the rotis, turned them over, placed the dry ones on top and the ghee ones below. So when the bhog was removed, it was seen that Shri Thakurji had eaten them all. Then he said to Shri Thakurji, “Maharaj! Why did you eat the dry rotis?” Then Shri Thakurji said to Padmaraval, “Why did you place the bhog before me? Whoever places bhog before me, that I will eat.” Then, happily, he sat to take mahaprasad. Some rotis he tied up in a cloth. The taste of that next day’s roti became very extraordinary. So, every day, when cooking food, offering bhog, and sitting to take mahaprasad, he would mix one piece from that roti into it before taking mahaprasad.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The greatness of this sentiment entered his heart, so he never considered the roti stale. All his life he kept those rotis. As a remembrance, for recalling the compassion of the Lord one day.

Later, having taken leave from Shri Ranchhodji, he departed. Then on the way he came to Baswada. Then Padmaraval went to the house of Gopaldas. He stayed at Gopaldas’s house that night. There, he cooked food, offered bhog, and took mahaprasad. Then Padmaraval said to Gopaldas, “By your grace, I had the darshan of Shri Acharyaji. Shri Ranchhodji manifested directly. He accepted me and blessed me.” Then Gopaldas said, “Shri Acharyaji is always merciful like this.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In his heart he knew, “He is only to this extent a deserving one. Therefore, Shri Ranchhodji gave him such a feeling. It is the will of the Lord. Good. He has been freed from the world and attained fulfillment.”

Later in the morning, Padmaraval took leave from Gopaldas and came to Ujjain and began to do divine service. Such is the great grace he

received from Shri Acharyaji.

Varta 30 - Purushottam Josi Sanchora

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Purushottam Josi Sanchora, resident of Gujarat, the sentiment of his story is described here—

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Purushottam Josi is, in the lila, the sakhi of Visakhaji. Her name is "Gunchuda." And Purushottam Josi's wife is the sakhi of "Gunchuda." So her name is "Durvasa."

Both were born in separate Sanchora households in Gujarat. Then Purushottam Josi's marriage took place. Purushottam Josi became seventeen years old. Then, once, Shri Acharyaji came to Gujarat. At midday, Purushottam Josi was performing sandhya at a pond. Then Shri Acharyaji came to the pond and began to perform the sandhyavandan. Shri Acharyaji showed grace towards Purushottam Josi and looked upon him, knowing him as a divine one. Then Purushottam Josi came near Shri Acharyaji, bowed, and asked, "Maharaj! Is this path of karma greater, or is the path of gyana greater?"

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "The path that firmly arises in one's mind, in which one has faith, and which is pleasing to that person—that path is great. And the greatest is the path of bhakti, in which the soul attains fulfillment. And on the path of gyana and the path of karma, fulfillment is attained with difficulty. There is no support for it. Why? Because they are attained with hardship. In this age, the body's hardships cannot be undertaken. If someone endures hardship of the body, then the mind does not stay steady. Therefore, a soul on the path of bhakti attains fulfillment. And there is no dependence."

Then Purushottam Josi said, "Maharaj! What is the form of bhakti? Please tell me with grace." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "If one describes the form of bhakti, there is no end to it. But I will tell you a little." Then he composed the "Bhaktivarddhani" text and recited eleven shlokas to Purushottam Josi. He is a most excellent recipient. Therefore, complete understanding arose within him. Then, bowing to Shri Acharyaji, he made a request, "Maharaj! For so many days we have been crushed and ruined in the path of karma. But nothing came into our hands. We wasted our life in vain. Now please take us into your shelter. Order us, and we will do as you say." Then, seeing his

firm love, Shri Acharyaji spoke the Name and performed brahmasambandh. And he placed his feet upon his head. He placed his feet upon his heart. And he said, “The path of bhakti will be revealed to you. You are qualified for firm, single-pointed bhakti.”

Then Purushottam Josi made a request, “Maharaj! Please come to my house and initiate my wife.” Then Shri Acharyaji came to the house of Purushottam Josi and gave her naam nivedan diksha. Later he gave the order, “You should do the service of the Lord.” Then Purushottam Josi said, “Maharaj! In my house there is Shri Thakurji. I have been doing worship in the way of maryada. Now, as you order, I will do service.” Then Shri Acharyaji gave Lalji a Panchamrit bath, seated him on a seat, and placed him on the head of Purushottam Josi. Mother and father had already left their bodies earlier. So both of them began to serve with love. Later Shri Acharyaji went to Shri Dwarika. Then Purushottam Josi did service for many days. Remaining absorbed in the divine sentiment of the Lord, he remained uninterrupted. He did not reveal the feeling of his heart before anyone.

Prasang 1 – Journey to Gokul and Meeting Krishna Bhatt

Once, this arose in the mind of Purushottam Josi, “Let us go to Shri Gokul and have the darshan of Shri Gusainji.” So he said among the people of his community, “We are going to Kashi.” Taking the name of Banaras, he placed Shri Thakurji on a horse together with his wife and set out. In a few days they came to Ujjain. Then in Ujjain he asked, “Where does Padmaraval’s son live? He is the sevak of Shri Gusainji; let us meet him.” Then the people said, “Padmaraval has four sons. Among them, three sons live together. And one, Krishna Bhatt, lives separately.” Then Purushottam Josi thought, “First let us go to the houses of the three sons.” So he came to the three sons. When the three sons met, they gave him a little grain. Then Purushottam Josi thought, “Why should we think that these are the sons of Padmaraval? They seem like ordinary Brahmins. Not even one sign of love is in them. But if we return the grain, they will say, ‘He returned it thinking it was too little.’ Therefore, we should not speak with them.”

Later, Krishna Bhatt heard that Purushottam Josi had come. Then Krishna Bhatt, with love, brought Purushottam Josi to his home. He prepared beautiful offerings, offered bhog to Shri Thakurji, and, with love, had Purushottam Josi and his wife take mahaprasad. He kept them in the house for four or five days with many requests. Then Purushottam Josi said, “Padmaraval’s true son should be just like this.

And those three sons gave only a little grain, from which we remained hungry."

Later, Purushottam Josi prepared to depart. Then Krishna Bhatt went along with them. They stopped at a stage on the way. When it was known that Krishna Bhatt was asleep, he said to his wife, "Is Krishna Bhatt asleep?" Then the wife said, "Yes, he is asleep." Then he spoke to his wife the divine stories and the sentiments of lila, "Do not say this before Krishna Bhatt. You know, if there is no fitness, then how can one speak?" Thus two or four days passed. Then Krishna Bhatt understood in his mind, "They are hiding the divine stories from me and speaking them without me. If they are not speaking with me, then I will have them tell the divine stories to me."

Later, in the morning, when the caravan set out, Krishna Bhatt said to Purushottam Josi's wife, "You hold him from one side while I narrate the divine stories." Then Purushottam Josi's wife came near the horse and signaled Krishna Bhatt, "Good." Then, holding from one side, Krishna Bhatt began such divine storytelling that Purushottam Josi lost awareness of the body. He became absorbed in rasa. Then he began to slip from the horse. Then from both sides they held him up. Later, doing so, when they reached the stage (majli), they began to take him down from the horse. Then Purushottam Josi said, "Why are you taking me down from the horse right now? I am still sitting." Then the wife said, "We have reached the stage. Since this morning we have been traveling, and now it has become the last quarter of the day." Then Purushottam Josi, becoming attentive, got down. But the ecstasy of the divine storytelling did not subside. Later he began to converse with Krishna Bhatt. Day and night they remained absorbed in the rasa of the Lord's lila.

Doing this daily, they arrived at Shri Gokul. Then, bowing to Shri Gusainji, Purushottam Josi said, "Maharaj! From where did such grace come upon Krishna Bhatt?" Then Shri Gusainji, from his holy mouth, said, "Krishna Bhatt has association with his uncle Harivansh. Therefore such grace is there." Then the doubt of Purushottam Josi was removed. From then on, he opened his heart and began to tell the divine stories of the Lord. Later, after staying a few days in Shri Gokul, taking leave from Shri Gusainji, Purushottam Josi went with Krishna Bhatt together with his wife. Speaking the divine stories, in a few days they came to Ujjain. Then Krishna Bhatt, with love, kept them in his house for four days. Speaking of divine stories, they became very pleased. Later, taking leave of Krishna Bhatt, Purushottam Josi came to his home in Gujarat together with his wife. He did divine service. And he spoke the divine stories of the Lord. He

did not concern himself with worldly knowledge. Such a devoted Purushottam Josi is there together with his wife. Where should one tell their story?

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In their matter, this principle was established—that devotional storytelling should not be done without a worthy recipient.

Varta 31 - Jagannath Joshi

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Jagannath Joshi of Kheralu, his Varta is expressed in sentiment –

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The way he attained shelter is explained further in the Varta of his mother.

Prasang 1 – Shri Thakurji Rejects the Offering

One day Jagannath Joshi adorned Shri Thakurji with ornaments, dressed Him in fine clothes, and after arranging the Rajbhog platter, placed the offering before Shri Thakurji. Then he came outside. At that moment, a thought came into Jagannath Joshi's mind – "Thakurji is wearing the clothes and ornaments. So, the platter will get touched."

Shri Thakurji understood the thought of Jagannath Joshi's mind. So, Shri Thakurji kicked the platter with His foot and threw it down from the table. Then Jagannath Joshi again prepared the items, washed the platter, washed the table, and placed it. Again, Shri Thakurji kicked it down from the table. Then Jagannath Joshi once more prepared the items, washed the platter and the table, and placed it. Then again Shri Thakurji kicked it down from the table. Then once more he prepared the items and placed them in the same way. Then again Shri Thakurji kicked it and threw it down.

By the fourth time, Jagannath Joshi became very tired. He began to bow his head low and thought, "What offense has occurred, that as many times as I place the platter, Shri Thakurji throws it down? The items are not being accepted." Thinking this in his mind, a great feeling of restlessness and humility arose in him.

Then Shri Thakurji said, "If you are afraid that the platter will be touched, then why do you place it before Me?" Hearing this, Jagannath Joshi rubbed his nose on the ground and made many requests: "Maharaj! I made a mistake. Now please forgive my offense. I did not know anything." In this way, he pleaded greatly.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning here is that Shri Acharyaji has said in Shri Subodhini – if in the divine play of Shri Thakurji, one maintains two types of feelings towards the form of Shri

Thakurji, then Shri Thakurji becomes displeased.

One is the feeling of impossibility (asambhav-bhav). Another is the opposite feeling (vipreet-bhav). The feeling of impossibility is like thinking – "Shri Thakurji plays with others. How can Thakurji accept food in the house of a lowly caste? If touched by Shri Thakurji, the food will be defiled. Why did He eat without bathing after meeting people of the Ahir caste? Shri Thakurji has some disease. How will Shri Thakurji daily accept such a vast amount of food at Annakut? Shri Thakurji has now become old. Why did Shri Thakurji perform this pastime?"

Such various types of false reasoning should not be applied to the Lord. That is why, in Purushottam Sahasranam it is said – "Tarkagocara Karyakrit" – the works of the Lord are beyond reasoning. The works of the Lord are beyond logic. They do not fall within the grasp of anyone's intellect or arguments. He is fully capable of doing, not doing, or doing otherwise.

This is the feeling of impossibility. An opposite feeling is, for example – "A smell comes from Shri Thakurji's mouth, so he should be made to chew betel or brush His teeth. One should economize for Him. Braj is eighty-four kos, how can He roam the entire land in one day? There are so many cows, how can all of them be milked? Earlier He appeared in Braj, but now where is He in Braj? Nowhere does He appear. Lowly things like carrots, radishes, watermelons, etc. have been manifested by Thakurji Himself – what fault is there in offering them? How can Shri Thakurji enjoy with all the Gopis together?" And so on – these kinds of opposite feelings arise.

However, in Jagannath Joshi's case, it was from his simple nature. That is why Shri Thakurji spoke and said, "If you fear that the platter will be touched, then do not place it before Me." Then his offense was forgiven, and he considered himself ignorant.

Thus, it is shown that from impossibility-feelings and opposite-feelings, Shri Thakurji becomes displeased. This should not be done.

Prasang 2 – Shri Thakurji Accepts Hot Kheer

Jagannath Joshi offered hot kheer to Shri Thakurji. In this way, Shri Thakurji ate the hot kheer. After some days, Shri Acharyaji came to the village of Kheralu at the house of Jagannath Joshi. Then he saw the lips and tongue of Shri Thakurji very red. Then Shri Acharyaji asked Shri Thakurji, "Baba! Why are your lips and tongue very red?"

Then Shri Thakurji said, “Jagannath Joshi offers me hot kheer, so I eat it.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said to Jagannath Joshi, “Why do you offer hot kheer to Shri Thakurji?” Then Jagannath Joshi said, “Maharaj! We know that he eats hot food, so we offer it.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Do not offer kheer that is too hot. Put your finger in it and test it. If your finger can bear it, then place the offering. And if other food is hot, do not worry about offering it.” From then on, Jagannath Joshi began to check the kheer by dipping his finger before offering.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here a doubt may arise – why did Shri Thakurji eat hot food? Why didn't he tell Jagannath Joshi? The reason is that from the day Jagannath Joshi developed the impossibility-feeling (asambhav bhav) in his mind about the platter being touched, from that day Shri Thakurji did not show many experiences. He ate only out of affection.

Prasang 3 – The Incident of Jwari Dhokla

And one time, Jagannath Joshi set out to have darshan of Shri Acharyaji. On the way, the day of Annakut came. Then Jagannath Joshi asked one sevak of Shri Acharyaji, a Mathur – “Go to the village and bring the best items available – lentils, rice, ghee, sugar, etc.” So that Vaishnav went to a village. That village was small. Only jwari (sorghum) was found. Nothing else was available. He came back and told Jagannath Joshi, “Only jwari is found in this village, nothing else. The village is small.” Then Jagannath Joshi said, “It is God’s will. Bring jwari.”

Then the Vaishnav brought the jwari. Then Jagannath Joshi said, “Clean it well by winnowing and pounding.” So that Vaishnav carefully cleaned the jwari and brought it. Then Jagannath Joshi placed it on the fire in water. Then Vaishnav said, “This jwari husk, tie it with water and keep it above, then with steam the dhokla will be prepared quickly.” So Jagannath Joshi tied it and placed it above.

When the jwari began to boil and bubble, then that husk dhokla fell into the jwari. So everything mixed together. When Jagannath Joshi saw this, he felt much sorrow in his mind. Then he accepted it as God’s will, and offered it as it was, received Mahaprasad, and later slept.

Then Shri Thakurji said to Jagannath Joshi, “The husk dhokla is troubling my stomach.” Then Jagannath Joshi offered ajwain, salt, etc.

Then Shri Thakurji said, “Now my stomach is relieved.” Then Jagannath Joshi felt great regret in his mind – “Today Shri Thakurji suffered greatly.” From that day, whenever he traveled, he stopped at a good village.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this Varta is that Jagannath Joshi had a very simple nature. Then Shri Thakurji was pleased. Earlier, when the impossibility-feeling about the platter being touched came in ignorance, Shri Thakurji had become displeased. He did not speak much. But Jagannath Joshi’s nature was simple, without false reasoning, without scholarly arguments. Whatever came simply to his mind, nothing more. Therefore, Shri Thakurji, knowing his simple nature, was pleased. To show affection, He said, “My stomach is troubled.” Then Jagannath Joshi, out of great love, felt pain in his mind. He offered ajwain and salt. Then Shri Thakurji became very pleased with him and said, “Now my stomach is relieved.” Then Jagannath Joshi’s sorrow was removed.

If he had been clever in knowledge, he would have argued – “How can Shri Thakurji’s stomach ache? He is God.” But Jagannath Joshi was straightforward and guileless in devotion. Therefore, Shri Thakurji was again pleased. This shows that when one’s heart has love and a simple nature, then even if offenses occur, Shri Thakurji bestows grace. His favor does not turn away.

Prasang 4 – The Garland and the Rajput

And one time, after Jagannath Joshi completed the offering at his home, he opened the doors of the temple. At that time, darshan was happening. Then Jagannath Joshi was fanning Shri Thakurji. At that time, one Garasia Rajput came for darshan. He was seeing. And ten to fifteen other Vaishnavs were also seeing. Then one simple woman brought a flower garland and threw it from a distance upon Shri Thakurji. It fell upon the throne of Shri Thakurji.

Then Jagannath Joshi became very angry. He took the garland and threw it outside. Then it fell upon the neck of another Rajput. Then Garasia Rajput thought in his mind, “If Joshi did not give the garland to me. If I am a true Rajput – I will strike Jagannath Joshi at his place.” So he began roaming with a sword, seeking an opportunity to strike.

One day, Jagannath Joshi was returning from outside the village after cleaning his teeth. Garasia Rajput came from behind and struck his sword upon Jagannath Joshi. Then Shri Thakurji, from behind, caught

the Rajput's hand in the air and said, "Do not strike him." Then Rajput struggled greatly, but his hand remained held up. It did not move.

Then Jagannath Joshi turned back and saw Shri Thakurji standing there, weary! Then Jagannath Joshi said, "Wicked sinner! What have you done?" Then Rajput dropped his sword and fell upon the feet of Jagannath Joshi.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why? Because the Rajput realized, "These are great souls. My hand did not move." Then he dropped the sword and fell at his feet. Then he said, "Forgive my offense." He pleaded greatly. But Jagannath Joshi did not release him quickly. He said, "Make me your sevak. You are of God, I am sinful. By your grace, I will be saved. Otherwise, I have no refuge." Then compassion arose in Jagannath Joshi. He said, "Come home. I will give you the Name." Then, coming home, he bathed himself, and after bathing that Rajput, gave him the Name.

Later, when Shri Gusainji came to Gujarat, Jagannath Joshi presented the Rajput before him and had the Name given. Thus he became a good Vaishnav. He was uplifted.

So, when someone associates with the devotees out of love, his upliftment happens. What more can be said? And in the temple, when Jagannath Joshi became angry before Shri Thakurji and threw the garland outside, that anger was a form of impurity. That offense happened. To remove that fault, through Rajput's sword-attack, the offense was cleared. Then to deliver that Rajput, his mind was turned, and he fell at the feet of Jagannath Joshi.

That Rajput was not of the divine play relation. He was a qualified soul for liberation. Why? Because it is said in Ras Panchadhyayi: "Kāmam krodham bhayam sneham aikyam sauhrdam eva cha" – through lust, anger, fear, love, union, or friendship with Shri Krishna, liberation happens. So through anger, that Rajput attained liberation.

Therefore, Jagannath Joshi was such a blessed devotee, beloved of Shri Acharyaji.

Jagannath Joshi's Mother

Prasang 1 – The Two Sons of Jagannath Joshi's Mother

Now, they speak of the devotion of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, the mother of Jagannath Joshi, who lived in Kheralu. She had two sons. Among them, the elder son was Narhari Joshi and the younger was Jagannath Joshi.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, the mother was a companion of Shri Swaminiji. Her name was Chhabisindhi. Chhabisindhi had two friends—one named Gandharekha and the other named Saurabhi. The mother was the form of Chhabisindhi, Narhari Joshi was the manifestation of Gandharekha, and Jagannath Joshi was the manifestation of Saurabhi. Their father was very wicked. He did not respect any saints, sages, scholars, Brahmins, or Vaishnavas. If any came to the village, he would trouble them. At night he would have thefts committed and would loot people. Thus, he was hostile to the path of God.

Once, Shri Acharyaji traveled from Adel to Dwarka. After some days, he came to the village of Kheralu in Gujarat. He stopped in a garden outside the village. There, the mother of Jagannath Joshi came to fetch water. At that time, Shri Acharyaji was speaking on the story of Shri Subodhiniji to the wives of yajna-performers. That woman listened and became very pleased. She then prayed to Shri Acharyaji and said, "Maharaj! Please make me your sevak. Do not stay here. My husband is very wicked. If he comes to know, he will have theft committed at night and will loot."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Where will he loot? As soon as he hears, people will say, 'Shri Acharyaji has come to the garden.' He is a divine soul, but how can I give you refuge now? Your husband is an enemy of dharma. In five years he will die. You will have two sons. After your husband dies, come to Adel. I will make you my sevak. Right now, it is not proper to make you a sevak."

The woman bowed, filled her water pot, and went home. Shri Acharyaji stayed three nights in Kheralu, but the woman's husband did not hear about it, so he did not come. After that, Shri Acharyaji went to Shri Dwarka to have darshan of Shri Ranchhodji.

Afterwards, the woman became pregnant, and within a year Narhari Joshi was born. In the third year, Jagannath Joshi was born. When five years had passed, one day a sanyasi scholar came to Kheralu. He had discussions with all the Brahmins. That night, the father of Jagannath Joshi went to loot that sanyasi. The sanyasi had an axe with him, and with it he struck him. The sanyasi became frightened and ran away. In the morning, people came to know, and the local

Brahmins together performed his funeral rites.

Then that woman remembered the words of Shri Acharyaji, who had himself said, “You will have two sons, and your husband will die in five years.” This all came true. She thought, “Now I should go to Adel after completing my pilgrimage and become Shri Acharyaji’s sevak and be fulfilled. Now there is no obstacle for me.”

She handed over the house to her trusted relative, left both sons in the house, and as she had much wealth, she kept some in the house and took some with her. She went to Tirtharaj Prayag to bathe, loading her things in a cart, and then traveled from Gujarat. After some days, she reached Prayag, bathed, performed some charity and good deeds, and then came to Adel. She bowed to Shri Acharyaji and prayed, “Maharaj! All that you said has come true. I had two sons, my husband died, and now I have no obstacles. Therefore, you are truly Purushottam. Please give me refuge. My entire life has gone in vain.”

Then after she bathed in Shri Yamunaji, Shri Achariyaji offered her name submission, and said, “Perform Bhagavad seva.” The woman then said to Shri Acharyaji, “Please grant me seva. I will do seva.” Shri Acharyaji said, “Go to Prayag and bring a Bhagavad form.” The woman went to Prayag, where at a potter’s house there was a Shri Thakurji. She offered some gifts and brought Shri Thakorji. Shri Acharyaji bathed the form with Panchamrit and placed Him on the woman’s head. After some days of staying with Shri Acharyaji and learning the ways of Pushtimarg, she was sent back. She returned to Gujarat and began seva with devotion and affection, offering service with love. After some time, Shri Thakurji began to reveal His grace.

Later, both her sons, Narhari Joshi and Jagannath Joshi, grew up. The mother said to them, “Go to Adel, become the sevaks of Shri Acharyaji, and perform Bhagavad seva. Also, take this mohur (gold coin) as my offering, and offer it with my bowing. Know Shri Acharyaji as the true Purushottam.”

Then Narhari Joshi and Jagannath Joshi left Gujarat. They had a hollow bamboo stick in which they placed the mohur. After some days, they reached Adel and asked, “Where is Shri Vallabhacharyaji?” They were told He had gone to Purushottampuri for the darshan of Shri Jagannathji. The two brothers thought, “If we return home, our mother will be displeased, saying, ‘Why did you come without becoming sevaks?’ So let us go to Purushottampuri.”

They went and, on arriving, asked, “Where does Shri Acharyaji reside

here?" A Vaishnav met them and told them. They came and had darshan of Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji asked them, "Is your mother well?" Both were amazed and astonished, thinking, "We have never met Shri Acharyaji before. What our mother said, that Shri Acharyaji is the very Lord Himself, is true." The brothers replied, "By your grace, Maharaj, she is well." Shri Acharyaji then asked, "Have you had darshan of Shri Jagannathji?" The brothers said, "Maharaj! We have not yet had darshan. We came directly to you." Shri Acharyaji said, "Go and have darshan."

The two brothers went and had darshan of Shri Jagannathji, where they saw Shri Acharyaji standing beside Shri Jagannathrayaji. They thought, "Perhaps we have taken a different path and this is another way." They quickly returned, but when they came back, they saw Shri Acharyaji seated again. They were bewildered. Shri Acharyaji asked, "Did you have darshan of Shri Jagannathrayaji?" They replied, "Yes, Maharaj, we had darshan." Shri Acharyaji then asked, "Has your doubt been removed?" They both prayed, "Maharaj! We are ignorant. It was wrong of us to doubt. You are truly Purushottam." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Your mother has sent an offering of one mohur. Offer it."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The two brothers had not brought the mohur as an offering, thinking, "If He is truly God, He will ask for it." When Shri Acharyaji asked, their faith became firm. They then placed the mohur as an offering and prayed, "Maharaj! Please show your grace and make us your sevaks." Shri Acharyaji told them, "Go and bathe, then return." After bathing, Shri Acharyaji offered their name submission. They stayed for some days, had darshan of Shri Acharyaji, and then were sent off.

The two brothers returned to their home in Kheralu and told their mother everything: "We were ignorant, but Shri Acharyaji revealed His greatness to us and removed our doubts." The mother replied, "I had already told you that Shri Acharyaji is the complete Purushottam. Why did you doubt it?"

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Acharyaji revealed His greatness to the two brothers so that simple-hearted and innocent Vaishnavas would not be led astray. If they saw the greatness of some other path or someone performing some wonders, they should not waver. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji made His greatness firm in their hearts. Now, all worldly and Vedic concerns appeared trivial to them. For the sake of their firm conviction, so much greatness was shown.

Afterwards, by their mother's command, they began to do seva. Thus, their mother was such a blessed devotee, graced by Shri Acharyaji. Therefore, her story is told up to this point.

Jagannath Joshi's elder brother Narhari Joshi

Now, they speak of the devotion of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Narhari Joshi, the elder brother of Jagannath Joshi; they narrate his account.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): His supernatural form in the divine play has already been described earlier in the account of his mother.

Prasang 1 – The Boy Who Asked with Outstretched Hand

So, once Narhari Joshi set out to have the darshan of Shri Jagannathrayaji and, for the sake of Shri Acharyaji's darshan, went to Purushottampuri. When he had gone beyond Patna, he halted at a stage on the way. He bathed and prepared the items, and made roti with dal. He offered bhog to Shri Thakurji. At that time, from a tree a boy of about twelve or ten years, very beautiful, came before Narhari Joshi and stretched out his hand to ask. Then Narhari Joshi was amazed, thinking, "Who is this?" Afterwards, taking the bhog down, he placed two rotis with dal on top on a leaf-plate and gave them into that boy's hand. Then that boy climbed up that very tree. He became invisible. Then, when Narhari Joshi looked again, there was no boy on the tree.

The next day, again he reached another stage on the way and halted. He bathed, cooked, and placed the bhog. Then again the boy came down from the tree and came before Narhari Joshi and stretched out his hand to ask. Then Narhari Joshi reflected in his mind that if it were some delusion, it should not be given. Thinking this, Narhari Joshi did not give anything. He took out a portion for the cow from the bhog placed down, and he himself sat to take the mahaprasad. Then Shri Thakurji, in the guise of a boy just as before, climbed that tree, became invisible, went home, and said to Jagannath Joshi, "I went to Narhari Joshi, stretched out my hand, and asked yesterday and today. Yesterday he gave two rotis and dal. Today he did not give anything. So I came back." Then Jagannath Joshi wrote down that month and that date, saying, "When Narhari Joshi comes, then I will ask."

So Narhari Joshi reached Purushottampuri and there had the darshan of Shri Acharyaji. Afterwards, having the darshan of Shri Jagannathrayaji, he stayed there for some days and then departed from there. In a few days he came to his own home in Kheralu. Then Jagannath Joshi asked Narhari Joshi for all the news of Shri Acharyaji. So Narhari Joshi told everything: that the refutation of Mayavada had been done, and that He was residing in great excellence. Then Jagannath Joshi asked Narhari Joshi, "On such-and-such day, who came to ask from you and you did not give?" Then Narhari Joshi said, "When I went beyond Patna, on the first day a boy of a year ten came before me, stretched out his hand, and asked, so I placed two rotis with dal on top and gave them into that boy's hand. Then he climbed up the tree and I did not see him again. Afterwards, on the second stage, again that boy came from the tree. Then I reflected that if it were a delusion, it would not be proper to give. And if it were the Bhagavad form, how could I give mahaprasad? Thinking this, I did not give anything. Then that boy climbed the tree and became invisible. Thus, a doubt arose in my mind; therefore, on the second day I did not give."

Then Jagannath Joshi said, "You did wrong. It was Shri Thakurji Himself who came and stretched out His hand to ask. You did not give, so you did not do well. And when we both first went to Shri Jagannathji for Shri Acharyaji's darshan, our mother gave one mohur as an offering. We hid it. This very doubt arose in us, that if He is God, then Shri Acharyaji will ask for it. He asked for the mohur. And in the temple of Shri Jagannathrayaji too He gave darshan. And at home also He gave a time-bounded darshan and removed our doubt. We are sevaks of such a Purushottam Shri Acharyaji; a delusion does not come near. You took it to be a delusion—that was not good. By Shri Acharyaji's command, Shri Thakurji, out of grace, asks from us and from you." Then Narhari Joshi's doubt went away.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The intent of this account is that grace came upon Jagannath Joshi as soon as he became a sevak. So his mind became attached to Shri Thakurji. And in Narhari Joshi's mind there was this much sense of worthiness: "I am the elder brother, Jagannath Joshi is the younger brother. Therefore I understand much." Thus, although Shri Thakurji revealed His own form—coming as a boy from the tree and asking—still Narhari Joshi did not recognize Shri Thakurji. Then Shri Thakurji spoke to Jagannath Joshi. He did not speak to Narhari Joshi. Afterwards, when they came home, Jagannath Joshi said, "Why did you doubt? You did wrong in not giving it to Shri Thakurji." Hearing this, the pride of Narhari Joshi was humbled: "I did not recognize Shri Thakurji.

Jagannath Joshi is greatly a recipient of grace." In this way, considering himself low, he performed seva. From that day, just as Shri Thakurji used to reveal affectionate favor to Jagannath Joshi, so He began to reveal affectionate favor to Narhari Joshi also. Therefore, a Vaishnav should not consider another to be small and should not consider his own worthiness. He should consider all Vaishnavas to be greater than himself. Then Shri Thakurji bestows grace. This principle was made manifest.

Prasang 2 – Mahidhar and Phoolbai Become Vaishnavas

And once Narhari Joshi went to the village of Aliyana in Gujarat. There was Narhari Joshi's yajman there. His name was Mahidhar. And Mahidhar had a sister named Phoolbai. To her, Narhari Joshi said, "Become Shri Gusainji's sevak. Become a Vaishnav, then our meeting will remain." Then Mahidhar and Phoolbai said, "That is very good. Invite Shri Gusainji. We will become sevaks. By your grace, if we become Vaishnavs, our birth will be fruitful." In this way, they became pleased.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why? Both are divine souls, companions of Shri Chandrawaliji in the divine play. In the lila, Mahidhar's name is "Kurangakshi." And Phoolbai's name is "Chapalanaini." They are very beautiful. Their eyes are supremely beautiful. So pride of beauty arose in their minds. Therefore, by Shri Chandrawaliji's curse, they manifested on earth. This is a connection from a prior lila. Therefore, as soon as Mahidhar was to be married, his wife died. His mother and father also died. Only these two—Mahidhar and Phoolbai—remained. The father's wealth was great. So, when becoming Vaishnavs was mentioned, the brother and sister became very pleased.

Afterwards they said, "Quickly invite Shri Gusainji." Then Narhari Joshi came to Kheralu and wrote a letter of humble request to Shri Gusainji. In it he wrote, "If you graciously come to Gujarat, many lives will be uplifted." Then Shri Gusainji came. He stayed in Kheralu at the house of Jagannath Joshi. Then Narhari Joshi went to the village of Aliyana and said to Mahidhar and Phoolbai, "Congratulations. Shri Gusainji has come to the village of Kheralu, to the house of Jagannath Joshi." Then Phoolbai said to Mahidhar, "What should we do now?" Then Mahidhar said to Phoolbai, "Sister! Do not worry. I will make a khichri of rupees and mohurs, offer it as nyochhavari to Shri Gusainji, and bring Him to our home."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown: “If I make such a great nyochhavari, then what doubt can the mind have?”

Hearing this, Phoolbai and Narhari Joshi became very pleased in their hearts, thinking, “Mahidhar’s love is indeed good.” Afterwards, they came to Kheralu. Narhari Joshi, Mahidhar, and Phoolbai bowed and, with humble prayer, brought Him to the village of Aliyana. Then Shri Gusainji came. So Mahidhar and Phoolbai made a khichri of rupees and mohurs, offered it upon Shri Gusainji as nyochhavari, and—amidst plundering (distribution), many instruments, music, and so on—brought Him into the house. Afterwards, Mahidhar and Phoolbai bathed and had name-submission performed. In their house, first there was Shri Thakurji, and according to the path of maryada they used to worship Shri Lalji. So Shri Gusainji gave Shri Thakurji a Panchamrit bath and seated Him on a mat. He placed Him on the heads of Mahidhar and Phoolbai. Mahidhar and Phoolbai made many offerings to Shri Gusainji and, with affection, kept Him in their house for five days. They learned all the ways of Pushtimarg. Afterwards, Shri Gusainji went to Dwarka. Then Mahidhar and Phoolbai made a humble request to Narhari Joshi, saying, “By your grace we became Vaishnavs. Now our new birth has occurred. Shri Gusainji has bestowed grace.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Such is the company of a Vaishnav. “Ardrikarana-tva”—when a wet cloth touches a dry cloth, the dry one also becomes wet. In the same way, by the company of a Vaishnav, one becomes a Vaishnav. Just as, by the company of Giriraj, Bhagavad-rasa arose for the Pulindi. Therefore, above all is such a company.

Afterwards, Narhari Joshi took leave of the brother and sister and came to his own village, Kheralu. Then Narhari Joshi said to Jagannath Joshi, “The love of Mahidhar and Phoolbai cannot be described, how good Vaishnavs they have become.” Then Jagannath Joshi said, “Upon whom Shri Gusainji bestows grace becomes Bhagavadiya—what is there to say of that? Afterwards, did they begin to do seva?”

Prasang 3 – The Fire in Aliyana and the Saving of the House

Then, after some days, a fire broke out in the village of Aliyana. In the morning, at that time, Narhari Joshi had gone outside the village of Kheralu to the tank to perform bodily functions, performed his daily

duties, and, placing flowers and tulsi in a flower-basket, with them in his hand, was coming home. At that time, Narhari Joshi came to know that a great fire had broken out in the village of Aliyana. So he reflected in his mind, “Now Mahidhar and Phoolbai have newly become Vaishnavs. If their house is burned, then they will say, ‘We became Vaishnavs; therefore, this calamity has occurred.’ Such a thought will come into their minds, and their dharma will be lost. It will be spoiled.” Thinking this, he looked for a good piece of ground, placed the tulsi branches on the earth, took water with a strainer, made a circle of water around, and sprinkled water. When the fire in the village of Aliyana was extinguished, he saved Mahidhar and Phoolbai’s house. Afterwards, Narhari Joshi took flowers and tulsi and came to his home. After some days, Narhari Joshi went to Mahidhar’s house in Aliyana village. Then Mahidhar and Phoolbai said to Narhari Joshi, “There was great disturbance of fire here. By the grace of Shri Gusainji, our house was saved. Because we became Vaishnavs, it was saved; otherwise, who knows what would have happened?” Then Narhari Joshi said, “Shri Gusainji is supremely compassionate. He has always been protecting Vaishnavs as a shadow. Therefore, for a Vaishnav there is always welfare.”

In this way, having given assurance to the brother and sister, afterwards he took leave and came to his own home in Kheralu. Then the two brothers arrived for seva at home and sat. Then Narhari Joshi said to Jagannath Joshi, “One day a fire broke out in the village of Aliyana. Then in the morning I was returning after performing my daily duties at the tank. Flowers and tulsi branches were in my hands. When I came to know that there was a fire in the village of Aliyana, I placed the tulsi branches on the earth, took water with a strainer, and made a circle of water around the tulsi; by that I saved the house of Mahidhar and Phoolbai.” Then to Narhari Joshi, Jagannath Joshi said, “By so much insistence you caused Shri Thakurji to take the trouble; that is not proper. This is not the way of our path. And who are we to save? Shri Thakurji is endowed with all power. He performs all the lila.” Then Narhari Joshi said to Jagannath Joshi, “I did not insist upon Shri Thakurji. It came into my mind that Mahidhar and Phoolbai have just now become Vaishnavs. If a disturbance of fire should occur in their house, then a thought may come into their minds, ‘We have just now become Vaishnavs, and now a fire has broken out.’ Then their love on this path would decrease. Then there would be an obstacle in their attainment of Bhagavan. Now firm faith has arisen in them toward Shri Gusainji and in Pushtimarg—that because they became Vaishnavs, they were saved. For the sake of this firmness I did this much. I have no other purpose.” Then the two brothers laughed

and were silent. The Lord is very playful. All happens by His wish. These—Narhari Joshi, Shri Jagannath Joshi, and their mother—these three are greatly Bhagavadiya. They may do as they wish. By their company, firm faith in Shri Thakurji arose for Mahidhar and Phoolbai. They began to do seva with love. Afterwards, in a few days, Shri Thakurji began to reveal affectionate favor to Mahidhar and Phoolbai. Therefore, where can their account be brought to an end? The accounts of Narhari Joshi, Jagannath Joshi, and their mother are to be known as one.

Varta 32 - Rana Vyas

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Rana Vyas, a Sanchoṛa Brahmin and resident of Godhra, his story is being told here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Rana Vyas in the divine play (lila) was Indulekha, the companion of Shri Swaminiji. Among the sakhis, her name was Nagavelika.

When Rana Vyas was about twelve years old, he set out on a journey. At that time, he was accompanied by a vairagi (renunciate). That vairagi had traveled to all four dhams and returned. He narrated the glories of Badrikashram, Shri Jagannathji, Shri Ranganathji, and Shri Ranchhodji.

In the middle of the night, Rana Vyas got up and departed. He first went to Badrikashram, where he suffered much hardship on the road. He had darshan of Shri Badrinathji, but his mind was not pleased, for the cold there was severe and the path so difficult that life itself was in danger. Afterwards, he went to Shri Jagannathji. On having darshan there, he felt some joy, but later he fell seriously ill. After a month he recovered. Then he thought, “If I fall sick again, I will surely die.” With this in mind, he left from there.

He then traveled south to have darshan of Shri Ranganathji. There he wondered, “How should I perform darshan here? If I see the face, then I cannot see the feet. If I see the feet, then I cannot see the face. He is so very large.” So he decided, “Now I will go to Dwarika.”

He reached Dwarika and had darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. He desired to touch His feet. But there the priest said, “Only if you pay such-and-such money can you touch the feet.” Rana Vyas thought to himself, “These brahmacharis are allowing touching of the Lord’s feet only for money. They take this money for themselves.” Thinking this, he decided it was not right to stay there. Why? Because where faults arise in the heart, staying there cannot bring welfare, only harm. Thinking this, he left Dwarika and returned to his home in Godhra, Gujarat.

By that time, his parents had become very old. Rana Vyas returned after eight years. His parents said to him, “Son, where had you gone? If you had stayed home, we would have married you by now. Even now, stay at home. Follow the customs of your community and your

marriage will take place."

Rana Vyas replied, "I will always remain a brahmachari. Why should I marry and then fall into hell? I am the conqueror of the senses." Hearing this, his parents remained silent. Later, his parents passed away. He performed their last rites and felt pleased in his heart that the bonds were cut. He thought, "Now I will do whatever I want. I also have ten to fifteen thousand rupees."

In this way, he became proud of his conquest of the senses and also of his wealth. Out of pride, he did not speak to anyone. In the village he became known as a siddh (accomplished one). Jagannath Joshi also received his name through Rana Vyas. Later, by the instruction of his mother, that same Jagannath Joshi became a sevak of Shri Acharyaji.

Rana Vyas had also studied somewhat. He thought to himself, "In this village everyone is ignorant. I should go to Kashi and debate with scholars." With this pride, Rana Vyas took some wealth from home and went to Kashi where the great scholars debated. There he was defeated and felt ashamed. Then he thought in his heart, "At midnight I will drown myself in the Ganga and die."

So in the evening, hungry since morning, he went and sat on the banks of the Ganga at Hanuman Ghat, saying to himself, "When night comes and no one is around, then I will drown in the Ganga."

At that time, Shri Acharyaji arrived there. A Vaishnav asked Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! If someone drowns himself in the Ganga, does he receive any fruit from the Ganga?" Shri Acharyaji replied, "If someone drowns out of pride or in anger, there is no fruit. He attains the birth of a serpent. It is suicide. Such a person becomes greatly sinful. He becomes afflicted with disease. If someone, with humility, accepts sannyas and drowns, only then is there some fruit—if at the time of death his mind is absorbed in Thakurji. Otherwise, there is downfall."

Hearing this, Rana Vyas realized, "This is a great soul." Understanding this, he came before Shri Acharyaji and prayed, "Maharaj! It is good that this Vaishnav asked this question. I was sitting here since morning without food, waiting to drown myself in the Ganga at midnight. But now you have saved me. Please show me the proper path. I surrender to you."

Shri Acharyaji said, "You yourself give out names, call yourself 'Swami,' and consider yourself highly qualified. Why then do you speak of being a sevak?" Rana Vyas prayed, "Maharaj! Indeed I had

much pride. But in Kashi, wherever I debated with scholars, I was defeated. Therefore I was ready to drown in the Ganga. It seems there is some good fortune in my destiny, that at this time I received your darshan. I am now very humble and without support. Please show mercy upon me."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Go, bathe in the Ganga and come back." Rana Vyas bathed in the Ganga and returned. Shri Acharyaji then gave him the Name, established Brahmasambandh with him, and gave instructions: "Now, wherever you have been defeated by the scholars, go there again and debate. You will return victorious."

That night, Rana Vyas cooked, offered bhog, and accepted mahaprasad. His heart was filled with joy. The next morning, after bathing, he offered prostrations to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji taught him the Chatushloki and said, "Go and debate with the scholars." With just one statement he defeated all the scholars, by the power of Shri Acharyaji's doctrine and strength.

Later in the afternoon, he returned, offered prostrations, and prayed to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji said, "You have defeated the scholars, but do not become proud. Whatever thing you take pride in, that very thing will be destroyed." Rana Vyas prayed, "Maharaj! I will no longer be proud. I have suffered greatly because of pride. Now please bless me so that I may receive divine grace. My life so far has been wasted in wandering."

Shri Acharyaji said, "Bring an image of Bhagavan from somewhere." Rana Vyas went to the market, purchased an image of Shri Lalji, and offered it. Shri Acharyaji performed Panchamrit Snan of the image, placed it upon Rana Vyas's head, and said, "You have wandered much. But now go home, remain devoted, and perform seva of Bhagavan with full attention." Rana Vyas offered prostrations to Shri Acharyaji, took leave, and returned to his home. Afterwards, he began to perform seva.

Prasang 1 – Jagannath Joshi Proves His Purity

At first Jagannath Joshi had received his name through Rana Vyas. When Jagannath Joshi heard that Rana Vyas had become the sevak of Shri Acharyaji, then Jagannath Joshi came to Godhra. He met with Rana Vyas. Both of them were very pleased. Afterwards, Jagannath Joshi stayed a lot with Rana Vyas.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): At that time, the pride of

scholarship had gone away from Rana Vyas's heart. But the pride of being the conqueror of the senses still remained. To remove this pride, Shri Thakurji performed a divine play.

By the will of God, Rana Vyas came into association with the wife of the Desai of Godhra. Someone reported this matter in the court of Rana Vyas. Then the officers of the ruler came and took Rana Vyas. At that time, Jagannath Joshi sent away Rana Vyas, the wife of the Desai to another village to hide. Jagannath Joshi remained in the house of Rana Vyas. He performed bhagavad seva and offered rajbhog.

In the meantime, the ruler's officers arrived. They asked, "Where is Rana Vyas?" Then Jagannath Joshi asked, "What is the matter?" The officers said, "Rana Vyas has committed adultery with another's wife. We will take him to the ruler." Jagannath Joshi replied, "Rana Vyas has gone somewhere. Come, I will answer to the ruler."

Then the officers took Jagannath Joshi and stood him before the ruler. The ruler said, "Bring Rana Vyas here. He has committed adultery with another's wife. Why has he not been brought? This is Jagannath Joshi. Him, I know well. One whose name is Jagannath Joshi could never commit adultery. Therefore, it is Rana Vyas who has committed adultery. Bring Rana Vyas here."

Jagannath Joshi said, "Please listen to me. Rana Vyas has not committed adultery. Someone has falsely slandered him. One whose name is Rana Vyas could never commit adultery." Then the ruler asked, "How can it be known that Rana Vyas has not committed adultery?" Jagannath Joshi replied, "I will do as you say." Then the ruler called for the wheel of a cart. He placed one spoke in fire until it became red hot. Then when it was glowing red, the ruler said, "Pick it up and wear it. If you are not burnt, then Rana Vyas is innocent."

Then Jagannath Joshi came near the hot spoke, stood there, and said, "If Rana Vyas has committed adultery, then may my hand burn." As soon as he said this, the fiery spoke became cool. Jagannath Joshi lifted the spoke with his hand and wore it around his neck. He stood there for a whole hour.

Then the ruler and all the people said, "Remove it, remove it! You are true." Then Jagannath Joshi asked, "Whose neck shall I place this upon?" The ruler with great humility requested, "Please place it upon the ground." Then he dropped it on the ground, and the earth was burnt. All were astonished and said, "O Jagannath Joshi, you are blessed. You are true."

Then the ruler said to Jagannath Joshi, “I am very pleased with you. Ask for something.” Jagannath Joshi replied, “Whoever has slandered Rana Vyas before you, please do not say anything to him. This is what I ask.” Hearing these words, the ruler and all others were pleased. They said, “You are blessed. You even saved the slanderer. Otherwise, I would have had him killed. Such a person is very rare on this earth.”

Then Jagannath Joshi returned home. Later, Rana Vyas returned home. Rana Vyas said to Jagannath Joshi, “You have suffered much for me.” Jagannath Joshi replied, “A Vaishnav never commits a low act.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): At that time, the pride of being the conqueror of the senses which remained in Rana Vyas’s heart was removed. Afterwards, Rana Vyas fixed his mind in bhagavad seva. Then Shri Thakurji began to show His favor.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this story, the principle is established that where there is pride and arrogance, Shri Thakurji does not reveal His experience. And for His devotees, He Himself mercifully punishes and removes their pride. A Vaishnav never does a low action. And if it ever appears that a bhagavadiya (one devoted to God) has done something wrong, then one should not think badly of him in the heart. Because a bhagavadiya never does so. In that, one should see the act of God. And one should have compassion for all living beings. Even if someone is a thief or guilty, still he should be saved from harm. Protection should be given. This is the dharma of a Vaishnav.

In this way, such principles were revealed. And when Rana Vyas first set out from home, he went to Badrinath and Jagannath, afterwards to Dwarika. There was a Brahmin scholar named Madhav Saraswati. He became his sevak and received his name. Later in Kashi, he became the sevak of Shri Acharyaji, as has been said above.

Prasang 2 – The Rajput Woman Saved from Sati

So Rana Vyas was going from Godhra to Siddhpur. One day, Rana Vyas and Jagannath Joshi bathed in the Saraswati and were sitting to perform Sandhya Vandana. At that time, a Rajput woman’s husband had died. She came to become a sati. Then Jagannath Joshi asked Rana Vyas, “What is the nature of this sati act?”

Then Rana Vyas shook his head and said to Jagannath Joshi, “This woman is uselessly burning her human body along with a ghost. If such a beautiful body were used in bhagavad seva, she would attain liberation. But she is burning herself with a corpse, wasting her birth.” Thus Rana Vyas spoke while shaking his head.

At that time, the Rajput woman’s gaze fell upon Rana Vyas. Seeing him shake his head, the fire of sati within her was extinguished. Then

the Rajput woman said to her companions, “I will not become sati. The fire of sati in me has gone out.”

Then the people told her, “If you do not become sati, then you will not be allowed back into your home. You will be burned here itself.” The Rajput woman replied, “I will not go back home. Build me a hut here on the banks of the river, I will stay here. If you forcefully burn me, then you all will be guilty of murder.” Saying this, she persuaded everyone, “Do not burn me.” So they cremated the dead man on the banks of the Saraswati, built a hut there, and all the relatives returned to their homes.

The next day, Rana Vyas and Jagannath Joshi came again to bathe in the Saraswati. Then the Rajput woman asked Rana Vyas, “Yesterday when you looked at me, why did you shake your head?” Then Rana Vyas said to her, “We were just speaking among ourselves on many topics. How did you take it into this matter?”

The Rajput woman replied, “Why are you hiding the truth from me? When you shook your head and spoke, the fire of sati within me was extinguished. I was not burnt. Therefore, this was a true matter for me. Now please tell me what my duty is. Whatever you say, I will do it. You saved me from burning by fire; it was by your mercy. You must now instruct me.”

In this way, the Rajput woman pressed him greatly. Then Rana Vyas said, “We were only saying that when a human body, the highest attainment, is wasted by burning with a corpse, it is a shame. That person is most sinful who does not use this body for the remembrance and devotion of Shri Thakurji.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): If this body is used for Shri Thakurji, then life becomes successful. There is nothing equal to this. This was what he was saying.

Then the Rajput woman said, “Now I surrender to you. In whatever way you instruct me, I will do bhajan and remembrance. Please have mercy on me so that my afterlife may be uplifted.” Then Rana Vyas said, “Right now you are in impurity (sutak). When the period of impurity is over, then come. At that time I will tell you.”

The Rajput woman offered prostrations and went to her hut. Her distress was very great, and every hour seemed like an age. She waited eagerly for the impurity period to end, so that Rana Vyas might instruct her. In the meantime, she remembered and worshiped

Shri Thakurji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Such deep yearning arises only in a divine soul. In the divine play, Rana Vyas was Indulekha's companion Madhura, and Madhura's companion was Nagavelika. Nagavelika's companion was Rasaeni, who was obedient. The manifestation of Rasaeni in this world was this Rajput woman. Therefore, in the divine play also, she was the obedient companion of Rana Vyas. That is why the Rajput woman had firm faith in Rana Vyas, believing that through him her liberation would happen.

Later, as long as the impurity period lasted, Rana Vyas came daily to the Saraswati to bathe. The Rajput woman would have his darshan daily, offer prayers with humility, and ask, "When will you accept me?" In this way, she continued until the impurity period ended. Then she bathed, purified herself, and sat by the river.

When Rana Vyas came to the Saraswati to bathe, the Rajput woman came before him, offered prostrations, and prayed, "Now please have mercy upon me." Rana Vyas said, "Come tomorrow morning. Then I will tell you." She offered prostrations and returned to her hut. Out of sorrow and separation, she ate and drank nothing. The next morning she bathed and sat by the river. Then Rana Vyas came, bathed in the Saraswati, and said to her, "Bathe again."

Then Rana Vyas gave her silken clothes, saying, "Wear these." She wore them. Then Rana Vyas made her sit down, meditated upon Shri Acharyaji, and spoke the divine Name to her. Upon hearing the Name, the bhagavad feeling arose within the Rajput woman. Then she prayed to Rana Vyas, "Now please tell me what service I should do, so that I may perform it." Then Rana Vyas showed his own dhoti and said, "Wash this and bring it to the house. And chant this Ashtakshar mantra with your mouth all day and night. Afterwards, more seva will be given."

So she washed the cloth carefully, brought it, and Rana Vyas made her do Shri Thakurji's seva, offering Rajbhog, and had her behold the Lord's darshan. Afterwards, she was given mahaprasad. In this way, for some days, she was given the seva of washing dhotis, upper cloths, and women's garments. She washed them with devotion, considering herself most fortunate. She brought the mahaprasad to Rana Vyas's house.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for washing clothes is that as the clothes of bhagavadiyas are washed, so the heart

becomes purified. As the dirt is removed from the cloth, so lust, anger, pride, envy, greed, and delusion are all removed from the heart. Then the heart becomes pure.

Later, in Rana Vyas's house, she began to do all the work, arranging everything, organizing all the items for seva, and other such services. After some days, Shri Acharyaji arrived. Rana Vyas welcomed Shri Acharyaji into his home and narrated to him the entire story of the Rajput woman. He prayed, "Now please show mercy and make her your sevak."

Then Shri Acharyaji, knowing her to be a divine soul, gave her the Name and established her connection. After some days, Shri Acharyaji stayed in Siddhpur and then went to Dwarika. Then that Rajput woman began to manage all the cooking arrangements. Shri Thakurji began to show His favor. In this way, through the association of Rana Vyas, that Rajput woman attained God.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that the association of a bhagavadiya is supremely great. By doing bhajan and remembrance of God, grace may come after a long time. But a bhagavadiya is filled with all powers. Even by a moment's association with them, Bhagavan gives grace. This shows that Rana Vyas was such a recipient of grace, that through his association, the Rajput woman became a bhagavadiya. Therefore, her story is told here.

Varta 33 - Ramdas Sanchora

Now the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Ramdas Sanchora, resident of Rajnagar—his story's sentiment is being told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this divine play, Shri Swaminiji's companion is Indulekha. Indulekha's companion is Subhaga. That same Subhaga manifested as Ramdas. And Subhaga's companion is Subhadra, who manifested as the wife of Ramdas. Both appeared in the homes of Sanchora Brahmin's in Rajnagar. At that time, Ramdas was nine years old, and his wife was eight years old. Their parents arranged their marriage. But from childhood itself, Ramdas had a disposition of renunciation. He never became attached to anyone, nor did he speak unnecessarily. His parents tried to educate him much, but he did not study anything.

One time, Ramdas was sitting at the pond in Rajnagar. There a Teli (oil-presser) came with ten or fifteen oxen. After giving water to the oxen, one ox drank water and then fell down at the pond and died. The Teli began to weep. Ramdas asked Teli, "Why are you crying?" The Teli replied, "My ox drank water and has just now died." Ramdas was only ten years old, so he did not understand. He said to Teli, "Why do you say it has died? It has just fallen, so lift it up." The Teli replied, "Now how can it rise? Its life has departed." Then Ramdas asked, "In this way will all die?" The Teli said, "Yes, this is the condition, sooner or later, a few days forward or behind." Hearing this, Ramdas ran away from there. In a few days, he reached Dwarka and had the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. There, Shri Acharyaji was narrating the katha of Subodhiniji. Ramdas came there and, listening to the katha, became very pleased. In his mind came the thought, "If I stay with Shri Acharyaji for some time and listen to his katha, it would be good. If I could become his sevak, that would be best."

After Acharyaji had finished the katha, Ramdas bowed down and prayed, "Maharaj! Please give me refuge. Keep me near you so that I may listen to the katha from your lotus mouth for some days." Shri Acharyaji asked, "Who are you? Where have you come from?" Then Ramdas narrated the entire story: "I live in Rajnagar. I am the son of a Sanchora. There at the pond I saw a Teli's ox die. Seeing that, detachment came into me. I ran away and here I had your darshan."

Shri Acharyaji thought, "This soul is indeed divine, but his age is

small. If I do not keep him near me, in the world there is bad company, and he may become spoiled. Therefore, let me keep him with me for some time until his detachment becomes firm, then I will let him go." With this thought, Shri Acharyaji said to Ramdas, "Go, take a bath and come." Ramdas bathed and came. Then Shri Acharyaji made him hear the Name, performed the initiation (nivedan), gave him Mahaprasad, and kept him near. For some days he stayed, and when Shri Acharyaji departed from Dwarka for the circumambulation of the Earth, Ramdas went along. He looked after the kitchen arrangements and did all the small services. Sometimes Shri Acharyaji, to test Ramdas, would give him little food, sometimes only a single roti. But he always accepted it happily as Mahaprasad. In his mind he never thought, "Why was I not given enough today?" Seeing this, Shri Acharyaji was very pleased. Ramdas carried all the materials, and when on the path there were thorns, he ran ahead to clear the way.

One day, a big thorn pierced Ramdas's foot. He thought to himself, "If I sit to remove this thorn from my foot, Shri Acharyaji will have to stand and wait for me. That is not good, my dharma will be lost. If I go ahead without removing it, then on the path there are many more thorns, what if some thorn enters the lotus feet of Shri Acharyaji? That too will be my loss of dharma." With this thought, he did not remove the thorn from his foot, but continued clearing the path. After walking a little distance, Shri Acharyaji stood and said, "Ramdas, remove the thorn from your foot. I am very pleased with you. Ask for whatever you wish." Ramdas replied, "Maharaj! I have received your shelter. What could be greater than this? Please give me your grace that my refuge in you always remains firm and never wavers." Shri Acharyaji, being very pleased, said, "So be it. You will receive everything." Then he said, "Remove the thorn, I am standing. You will never incur any offense." So Ramdas removed the thorn.

In this way, for ten years Ramdas served with Shri Acharyaji. His love remained always steady. Thus he was a vessel of divine grace. Later, when Shri Acharyaji undertook another circumambulation of the Earth towards the South, there a Brahmin offered a form of Shri Thakurji, saying, "I am unable to do worship." Shri Acharyaji kept that form with him and did seva for some days. Later, in a village, outside, they stopped. Shri Acharyaji told Krishnadas to go and bring supplies from the village, and from a carpenter get a stand made without nails. Ramdas brought the supplies. Shri Acharyaji prepared the meal, offered bhog, ate, and then told Ramdas, "Take Mahaprasad." Ramdas took the Mahaprasad and came near Shri Acharyaji.

Prasang 1 – Shri Acharyaji Placed the Form of Shri Thakurji

and the Padukas on Ramdas's Head

At that time, Shri Acharyaji gave that form of Thakurji, bathed in Panchamrit, and placed it on Ramdas's head. He named the form "Natuva Gopalji." And he placed the Padukas with the lotus feet on Ramdas's head.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Acharyaji never wore Padukas. He always walked barefoot, to sanctify the Earth and to fulfill the purpose of the Earth. Padukas were given only as grace, to provide seva. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji's Padukas had no nails. Shri Acharyaji placed Shri Thakurji on Ramdas's head and said, "Ramdas! Now you do Bhagavad seva. Wherever you stay, you need not fear. Devotion has come to you." In Ramdas's mind was the desire to remain always near Shri Acharyaji. But how could he disobey the command? He knew that whatever Acharyaji instructed was for his welfare. Thinking this, he bowed and departed. Many times, overwhelmed with longing, he looked back again and again for darshan, and he kept the form of Shri Thakurji in his heart. Shri Acharyaji's heart too was filled with emotion, for separation from such a Vaishnav is painful.

Ramdas's wife was a divine soul, a pativrata (chaste wife). She remained sorrowful in her parents' home. For her upliftment, Shri Acharyaji bid farewell to Ramdas. For three days Ramdas served Shri Thakurji and the Padukas. The bhog that he offered, he gave to the cow. Out of the grief of separation from Shri Acharyaji, he did not eat the Mahaprasad. On the fourth day, after offering bhog he began to distribute, Shri Acharyaji appeared in darshan and asked, "Why are you not taking Mahaprasad? I am always with you. Therefore, take the Mahaprasad." Then Ramdas, setting aside the cow's share, accepted the Mahaprasad.

In this way, sometimes in a detached state here or there, he did not remain in one place. While circumambulating the Earth, he returned to his village Rajnagar. By that time, Ramdas's parents had died. His wife was living in her parents' home. Ramdas came to his home. His father-in-law, learning that Ramdas had come, told his daughter, "Your husband has come. If he goes again, you may not get him back. If you wish, go with your husband. If you wish, stay here." The daughter replied, "Take me to my husband. I want nothing else." So

the father-in-law brought her to Ramdas's house.

When she came, Ramdas did not accept her as his wife, nor did he speak to her. He remained at home for two or four days, then left for Dwarka. His wife also followed him. But Ramdas did not allow her to come with him and threw stones at her. Yet, the pativrata wife walked at a distance, following. Whatever leftover from Ramdas's plate she got, she ate. If not, she remained hungry. In this way, after four stages of journey, Shri Ranchhodji spoke to Ramdas: "Why do you not accept your wife? Why did you abandon her?" Ramdas replied, "I am a renunciate, a vairagi. What use have I for a wife?" Shri Ranchhodji said, "Then why did you marry? And you, being the grace-filled sevak of Shri Acharyaji, should not act with such cruelty. And because you are Acharyaji's sevak, I cannot speak to you harshly. But still, accept your wife."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is that this wife is divine. For her acceptance, Shri Acharyaji himself bade you farewell, so why do you not accept her? Ramdas came to Dwarka because Acharyaji had accepted him there, not merely for Ranchhodji's darshan. Ramdas travels considering it the connection with Acharyaji. Therefore, Ranchhodji's words were not an order or punishment, but advice. Hence Ranchhodji said, "You are Shri Acharyaji's sevak. I cannot command you. I speak only as instructed by him. Therefore accept your wife."

Later, when they stopped at a resting place, Ramdas called his wife and said, "You keep watch over the bundle, I will go to collect firewood." His wife became happy, thinking, "Today grace has come upon me." She said, "I will go to collect the firewood." Ramdas replied, "This is not a woman's work, I will collect it." He brought the firewood, cooked, offered bhog to Shri Thakurji, then after distributing the cow's share, gave one plate to his wife and kept one for himself. Both partook of Mahaprasad.

In this way, they reached Dwarka and had darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. Ranchhodji said, "If you give your wife a Name, she will be able to prepare water and assist in the kitchen seva." Ramdas replied, "How can I give the Name? Only Shri Acharyaji giving the Name is proper." Ranchhodji said, "It is my order, you give the Name." Later, when Shri Acharyaji arrived, Ramdas narrated everything to him and said, "I am telling this only because it was the command of Shri Acharyaji, not by my own will." Thus Ramdas gave his wife the Name. She then began to fetch water and assist in the kitchen seva.

Later, leaving Dwarka, Ramdas thought in his mind, “Now it is not proper to keep wandering with my wife. It is better to settle in one place and do Bhagavad bhajan.” With this thought, after some days he came to his home in Rajnagar and began Bhagavad seva.

After some time, Shri Acharyaji came to Rajnagar. Ramdas went forward, bowed, and brought him to his home. He requested, “Maharaj! Please give the Name to my wife.” Shri Acharyaji said, “You have already given her the Name, why do you ask again?” Ramdas replied, “Maharaj! I gave it only because of Shri Ranchhodji’s order, and he too said, ‘Later have it given properly by Shri Acharyaji.’ Therefore, as per your wish, I gave the Name. Without your wish, I would never do anything. And for my wife’s acceptance, you yourself bade me farewell. Therefore, please accept her.”

Then Shri Acharyaji, being pleased with Ramdas, gave her the Name, performed Brahmasambandh. Afterward, in Ramdas’s home, food was prepared and bhog was offered to Shri Thakurji. After Acharyaji took food, he gave the remnants to Ramdas and his wife. Then Acharyaji ordered, “Now both of you stay in one home and do Bhagavad seva together.” Ramdas replied, “Maharaj! This was already in my mind, and now you have commanded it.”

Later, Shri Acharyaji went to Dwarka. Ramdas, with his wife, remained in Bhagavad seva, and in free time narrated to her the sentiments of Bhagavad Varta Granth. Thus both remained absorbed in Bhagavad seva. Therefore, Ramdas, along with his wife, was such a vessel of divine grace. This is where his story is told up to.

Varta 34 - Govind Dube

Now the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Govind Dube, who lives in Sanchora, in the village of Kheralu—the sentiment of his story is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Govind Dube is related to the Dwarka lila. He is the companion of Satyabhama. His name in the lila is “Tanmadhya.” His form is very beautiful, his waist like that of a lion. When Shri Thakurji came to Satyabhama’s palace, this companion Tanmadhya said to Shri Thakurji, “I am your maidservant; meet with me some day.” Shri Thakurji, smiling, said, “How can this be done in front of Satyabhama?” From a distance Satyabhama heard this, became angry, and cursed her, “You have made yourself equal to me; therefore fall to the earth.” Thus, from the lila she fell and took many births. Now she took birth in the house of a Sanchora. When he became fifteen years old, he said to his mother and father, “If I do some pilgrimage, it would be good.” Then the mother and father of Govind Dube said, “Son! You are now thinking of pilgrimage already. Will you become a renunciate? As for us, our mind does not wish to leave the home and go somewhere. In the home there is the comfort of food and living.” Govind Dube said, “I will indeed become a renunciate. Therefore do not even think of arranging my marriage. And as for you, you will keep working at household tasks until death —this I have understood. So I will go on pilgrimage.” The parents said, “We are old. If it be your wish, then go after we are gone. At this time, if you look after us and protect us, that would be good.” Govind Dube said, “What you say is true, but who knows anything of Time? Perhaps I may die; then my birth will have been wasted. Then who will look after you? Moreover, Shri Thakurji protects everyone. What power does a soul have? Therefore I will go to Dwarka and take the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji.” The parents said, “We cannot win against you in words; do as you wish.”

Govind Dube came to Dwarka. Having the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji, he felt great happiness in his heart. He stayed in Dwarka for three years. Meanwhile his parents left their bodies at home. Hearing this news, Govind Dube felt sorrow in his mind that his parents had not done any pilgrimage. Then in Govind Dube’s mind came the thought, “I should at least go and perform the Gaya–shraddha for my parents.” Having taken darshan of Shri Ranchhodji, he set out and came to Gaya

and performed the shraddha. Returning homeward, when he came from Gaya to Kashi, he bathed at Manikarnika and performed the Sandhyavandan. At that time Shri Acharyaji, from the house of the merchant Purushottam, came to bathe at Manikarnika. Govind Dube had the darshan of Shri Acharyaji. He understood that this was a great pandit. Then in Govind Dube's mind came the thought, "Let me study something with him."

After Shri Acharyaji bathed, he offered worship. Then Govind Dube came and made a request to Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! You are a great pandit. Will you teach me something?" Shri Acharyaji said, "Much learning is not in your destiny. If you study with attention, you will gain knowledge of letters, and later you will be able to read scriptures." Govind Dube said, "Maharaj! Reading scriptures is fine—whatever comes, that much is fine. I will read the Gita and the Bhagavata." Shri Acharyaji said, "Come to the camp in the third watch."

After that, Govind Dube went home and borrowed a grammar book from a Brahmin, saying, "I will read it and return it to you." The Brahmin said, "Keep it and study." Later Shri Acharyaji went to the house of the merchant Purushottamdas. After making the arrangements, he offered bhog and took his meal. Here, after eating his roti, Govind Dube came in the third watch to Shri Acharyaji with the grammar book, offered respectful greetings, and sat down. When Govind Dube took out the grammar book, Shri Acharyaji said, "How long will you study grammar? I will teach you the Gita. By studying the Gita, grammar will come on its own." Govind Dube said, "Maharaj! Without studying grammar, how will the Gita open? The custom in the world is: first study grammar, then when one has some knowledge of letters, then one looks into the scriptures." Shri Acharyaji said, "Do as I say." Govind Dube said, "Maharaj! I do not have a copy of the Gita." Shri Acharyaji took out a book and taught him one verse of the Gita. Then he said, "It is my command: recite the entire Gita." Govind Dube recited the entire Gita, all eighteen chapters. Then Shri Acharyaji explained the meaning of one verse of the Gita and said, "You also explain the meaning." Then Dube explained the meaning of one verse. Shri Acharyaji said, "It is my command: explain the meaning of the entire Gita." He then explained the concise meaning of the entire Gita. By then, one watch of the night had passed. Shri Acharyaji said, "Now you go and complete your grammar. The concise meaning of the Gita and the understanding of the text you have already gained; beyond this, it is not in your destiny."

Then Govind Dube returned to the house of the Brahmin from whom he had borrowed the grammar. He completed all the grammar. After midnight, he slept. Govind Dube thought in his mind, “Shri Acharyaji is Ishvara. He taught the Gita once in a concise way, and within that came grammar as well as the Gita. I gained knowledge of the concise meanings. This is not within the capacity of a mere soul. Therefore it would be best if I become his sevak.”

In the morning, after bathing, he came to Shri Acharyaji and offered full prostrations, then made his request: “Maharaj! Please give me refuge and bestow the Name.” Shri Acharyaji said, “You are a Brahmin, and I too am a Brahmin. Why become a sevak?” Govind Dube prayed: “Maharaj! We are only souls. How can we know your true form? If you, out of grace, reveal it, then we can know. Earlier, the pandit Brahmins knew you. But now I have understood that you are Ishvara. For you taught one verse of the Gita, and within that I gained knowledge of the concise meanings of the entire Gita. Therefore, kindly make me a sevak. We are ignorant souls. Please forgive our offenses.” Shri Acharyaji said, “We will go to bathe in the Ganga; there I will bestow the Name upon you.” Then he went to the Ganga, had Govind Dube bathe in the Ganga, and bestowed the Name and the initiation.

Govind Dube asked, “Now what is your instruction for me?” Shri Acharyaji said, “Do Bhagavad seva.” Govind Dube requested of Shri Acharyaji: “Maharaj! My father’s Shri Thakurji is with a Brahmin of our community. How shall I do his seva?” Shri Acharyaji gave the order: “Bring Thakurji to your home, bathe him with Panchamrit, and do Bhagavad seva.” Then, taking leave of Shri Acharyaji, in a few days Govind Dube came home. He took Shri Thakurji from that Brahmin, bathed him with Panchamrit in his own home, and began seva. But his mind did not become absorbed in Bhagavad seva; there was agitation in his heart.

And Shri Acharyaji had given this instruction to bathe Shri Thakurji with Panchamrit only because Govind Dube was not connected with the Braj lila; he was connected with the royal lila of Dwarka as the companion of Satyabhama. There is his attainment. Therefore, Achariyaji himself did not perform the Panchamrit snan. Later Shri Acharyaji went to Adel. A certain Vaishnav went from Adel to Gujarat and lodged at the house of Govind Dube. Govind Dube asked him for news of Shri Acharyaji’s welfare. The Vaishnav said, “From Kashi he has gone to Adel. He will stay there a few days. Afterwards, he will set out to circumambulate the Earth so I have heard. I have told you. Now it is your wish.” Saying this, the Vaishnav went to Dwarka the next

day.

Prasang 1 – Govind Dube's Restlessness and the Navratna

Instruction

While Govind Dube was doing seva at home, there was great disturbance in his mind. His mind did not become absorbed in seva. Then Govind Dube wrote a letter to Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! There is a great disturbance in my mind. My mind does not become absorbed in Bhagavad seva. What should I do?" The letter reached Shri Acharyaji. He read it and wrote out the "Navratna" Granth and sent it. And he wrote, "By reciting this 'Navratna' Granth, the disturbances of your mind will be removed." That letter and the "Navratna" Granth came to Govind Dube. Then Govind Dube, delighted, began to recite the "Navratna" Granth. By reciting it, through Shri Acharyaji's grace, the restlessness and anxieties of his mind were all removed. His mind became absorbed in doing Bhagavad seva.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of the disturbance that arose in Govind Dube's mind is this: Govind Dube, as a soul, is connected with the Dwarka lila, yet he was attempting seva with the sentiment of Braj. Thus his mind did not settle. He did not gain firmness in the royal lila, nor in the Braj lila. His mind ran to many practices—"Shall I do pilgrimage? Or some vow? Or some japa?"—thus the mind wandered. Therefore Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu sent the "Navratna" Granth, saying, "Do not be anxious. The agitation of the mind arises because, when the Lord's lila is known, the mind, going from Shri Thakur to any other place, should be taken as the Lord's own wish—do not worry. Do as much seva as you can." Then Govind Dube's mind became steady. When the mind goes toward worldly or Vedic matters, take it as Bhagavad will. When the mind goes much toward Shri Ranchhodji, take that too as Bhagavad will. Remain absorbed in his lila. Why? Because the scriptures and Puranas have stated many ways of meeting the Lord. For souls, they merely point out the path: wherever one is qualified, there the mind naturally and perfectly rests. Thus, as when a man shows a traveler the roads to ten villages, yet the one who knows which village to go to goes only to that village; in the same way, whether by a Bhagavad devotee, or by a guru, or by Ishvara—according to one's qualification—one gains the appropriate company, and in that very path one's sentiment becomes firm. Thus Govind Dube attained firm feeling for Shri Ranchhodji, which will be

described further on.

Prasang 2 – Katha Interrupted and the Lesson of Mahaprasad

At one time, Shri Acharyaji came to Dwarka from Adel. Then, coming by way of Gujarat, he arrived. So Govind Dube, Jagannath Josi, and five to seven Vaishnavs went along with him. Shri Acharyaji arrived and reached Dwarka. Then Govind Dube requested of Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! If you would begin with some episode of katha, it would be very good.” Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, “That would be very good. But just now I do not have leisure. When I have leisure, I will speak.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Its meaning is this: you are not related to the Braj lila. Therefore, if someone related to the Braj lila makes such a request, then I speak. In front of you there will be no happiness. This is the intention for which he said, “I do not have leisure.”

Then Govind Dube said, “Maharaj! Please say a little.” Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu opened the book and began the katha. Meanwhile, Shri Ranchhodji came and began conversing with Govind Dube. Govind Dube, conversing with Shri Ranchhodji, became absorbed. He was unaware that Shri Acharyaji was speaking the katha. “How can I converse?” Then Shri Acharyaji said to Govind Dube, “With the book opened, with whom are you conversing?” Then Shri Acharyaji turned his glance back toward the book and saw that Govind Dube was conversing with Shri Ranchhodji. Then Shri Acharyaji closed the book and, being displeased with Govind Dube, lay down. In the morning, rising, he himself prepared the kitchen, offered bhog, and took his meal. After that he said to his attendant Krishna Das Meghna, “Today, afterward, do not give the Mahaprasad from our thali to any Vaishnav. Damodardas Harsani and you take it.” Formerly, as a daily rule, the Vaishnavs would first take Mahaprasad from Shri Acharyaji’s thali, and afterward he would take with his own hand. So the attendant did accordingly. Damodardas—whom they call Damla—and Krishna Das took it, and it was not given to anyone else. That day all the Vaishnavs fasted and remained hungry.

On the next day, Shri Acharyaji went to take the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. Then Shri Ranchhodji said, “Yesterday you did not give the Mahaprasad to all the Vaishnavs, so all the Vaishnavs remained

hungry. Therefore, as by grace you used to give the Mahaprasad of the thali to all the Vaishnavs, just so, do give it."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is this: if he hears the katha from the lotus mouth, he will become absorbed in the Braj lila; afterward he will not come into my hands. Therefore, he engaged Govind Dube in conversation and did not let him hear the katha. And when anyone converses while katha is going on, then for the one whose mind is in the katha, there is great pain in the mind—just as while eating beautiful, sweet food, if a pebble suddenly comes under the tooth, there is pain; in the same way, if someone else speaks during the katha, there is pain. Therefore Shri Acharyaji became displeased. The flow of rasa ceased. The rasa that had surged in him became hidden. Therefore he closed the book and lay down. Or another intention is this: how could Shri Ranchhodji create an obstacle in Shri Acharyaji's katha? So Shri Govardhan himself, thinking, "You have become absorbed in rasa; in my many kinds of lilas with the devotees, in that fervor you will speak; and moreover, the listener is qualified for the royal lila—this is not appropriate," therefore Shri Govardhandhar inspired Shri Ranchhodji to converse with Govind Dube and caused the rasa to be concealed. Thus, on the next day, Shri Ranchhodji said to Shri Acharyaji, "Why did you become displeased with the Vaishnavs—that you did not give the Mahaprasad of the thali? This entire matter happened by the wish of Shri Govardhanathji. I did not do it. Therefore, as you daily give the thali's Mahaprasad to the Vaishnavs, just so give it."

Then Shri Acharyaji came to the camp and asked all the Vaishnavs, "Why did you not take Mahaprasad yesterday?" Then all the Vaishnavs prayed, "Maharaj! Yesterday we did not receive the thali's Mahaprasad, therefore we did not take prasad." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "The thali's prasad I will not give, but your intercession has been made very emphatically; therefore I will give it."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Its meaning is this: the fault is not yours. This matter happened entirely from the Lord's side; therefore I will give Mahaprasad.

Then all the Vaishnavs prayed, "Maharaj! We are attached to your lotus feet. Whatever is for our good, you will do." Then Shri Acharyaji ordered his attendant, "As daily you give the thali's Mahaprasad to all, in that way keep giving." Then the attendant gave Mahaprasad, and all the Vaishnavs took Mahaprasad. After staying in Dwarka for some days, then, taking leave of Shri Ranchhodji, he went to Adel. All the Vaishnavs came along up to Adel. Afterward, all the Vaishnavs took

leave, offered full prostrations to Shri Acharyaji at Adel, and went to their own homes. Then Govind Dube came to his home in Kheralu.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): So, at the word of Shri Ranchhodji, Mahaprasad was given; but should one remain with Govind Dube? Up to there he did not speak any katha. Thus it is shown that without qualification there is no relish in discourse.

Prasang 3 – Mirabai Visit and Gusainji's Instruction

And at another time, Govind Dube went to the house of Mirabai. Speaking Bhagavad discourse with Mirabai, he remained there for some days. This matter was heard by Shri Gusainji, that the sevak of Shri Acharyaji, Govind Dube, is with Mirabai, discussing discourse. Then Shri Gusainji wrote a verse and gave it to a Braj resident, and said, "Govind Dube is at Mirabai's house; take this paper to him." In that, he wrote this verse:

भगवत्पदपद्मपरागयुतो न ह युक्ततरं मरणेऽ प तराम ् । इताराश्रयणं गजराजगतो न ह रासभयप्युररीकुरुते ॥११॥

In it he wrote this: "One who is endowed with the pollen of the lotus feet of Bhagavan—there is nothing more proper than this, even at the time of death. Taking shelter elsewhere—just as one who has ridden an elephant does not ride a donkey, even out of fear of death—so too, it is not fitting to resort to another refuge."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this it is shown: you are the sevak of Shri Acharyaji, and at the house of an adherent of another path, Mirabai, you have become entangled in Bhagavad discourse? This is like leaving an elephant ride and riding a donkey.

So that paper the Braj resident placed in the hand of Govind Dube. At that time, Govind Dube was outside the village at the pond performing Sandhyavandan. There he read the paper, took his white garment from Mirabai's house, and departed. Mirabai felt much contentment, but he did not speak; he rose and went, and came to Shri Gusainji, offering full prostrations. Then Shri Gusainji said, "Do not speak of the discourse of our path in front of those of another path." In this way he instructed him. After that, taking leave of Shri Gusainji, Govind Dube came home.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Thus it is shown that Govind Dube's mind would become attached here and there. And Shri

Gusainji therefore gave instruction to Govind Dube—that if other Vaishnavs, seeing him, ever do company likewise, then the fruit of this path will not be attained. And as for Govind Dube, that is proper—for he is related to the Dwarka lila. But others do not have this knowledge. Therefore Shri Gusainji, for the purpose of making his Vaishnavs cautious, spoke thus. In this Pushtimarg, anything without the relation to Shri Acharyaji is to be known as entirely obstructing. If anyone insists obstinately, then nothing should be said to him; he is not a pure Pushtimargi. He will not have the experience of the Braj lila. Thus Govind Dube is maryada–pushti.

Varta 35 - Raja Dube and Madho Dube

Now the sevaks of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Raja Dube and Madho Dube Sanchora, living in Manund—the sentiment of their story is being told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): These two brothers are companions of Lalitaji. One is named “Kunjari,” skilled in arranging groves; she manifested as Raja Dube. The other is named “Rasalika,” like a bee in the juice of fruits, who attracts the bumblebee; in the same way, she remains absorbed in the nectar of lila. Rasalika manifested as Madho Dube. These two brothers took birth in the house of a Sanchora. Their father was very pious. By the custom of the maryada path he performed the worship of Shri Thakurji. When sadhus, saints, or renunciates passed by their house hungry, he would not let them go hungry; he kept them with affection. He always kept vigil on Ekadashi.

Then the mother and father of Raja Dube and Madho Dube became ill. They said to their two sons, “Now, at this time, if you bring us to take darshan of Shri Ranchhodji, that will be very good.” Then Raja Dube and Madho Dube hired two palanquins, seated their mother and father, and took Shri Thakurji along with them. They brought the mother and father to take the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. At that time, for some days, Shri Acharyaji was in Dwarka. There, the mother and father left their bodies. Raja Dube and Madho Dube performed the rites, so the period of impurity (sutak) began. They sat on the palanquin.

Then Raja Dube and Madho Dube asked the people, “If anywhere here there is katha–varta, Bhagavad discussion, then we will go there. The days of sutak are not passing.” Someone said, “Shri Vallabhacharyaji, having performed the circumambulation of the Earth, has arrived here; he is speaking katha very beautifully. You go there on the third watch.” Then Raja Dube and Madho Dube said to him, “Take us today; afterward we will go daily.” He said, “Good.” So he came in the third watch and took Raja Dube and Madho Dube. The two brothers bowed from a distance and sat at a distance. Shri Acharyaji said, “Come forward.” The two brothers said, “Maharaj, we are under sutak; therefore we are sitting at a distance.” Shri Acharyaji said, “You two

brothers are always pure. Come and sit before me. And if there is any doubt, ask."

Then the two brothers, delighted, came forward and sat. Shri Acharyaji described the Nanda Mahotsav—he narrated the fifth chapter of the tenth canto of the Shri Bhagavata. He caused the two brothers to have manifest experience of the lila of Nandalaya. When all the katha was completed, the two, bowing down, said, "Maharaj! What shall we do? There is sutak; otherwise we would make a request. Now our birth has borne fruit, for we have obtained your darshan." Shri Acharyaji said, "I know the thoughts of your minds—that you two are mine. After the sutak, I will accept you. For that reason I am here: I will accept you, fulfill all your desires, and then go elsewhere. Do not worry or fear. Now go to your camp and come here tomorrow at the same time." Then the two brothers, bowing down, delighted, went to the camp. The realized, vivid experience of the lila of Nandalaya remained.

In the morning, rising, the two brothers spoke with each other: "Now we have been made successful. Shri Acharyaji is verily Purushottama —who in a single day's katha has given us the experience of lila–rasa." In this way, they passed the days of sutak gradually. On the eleventh day, after bathing, becoming pure, they came very early to Shri Acharyaji and made their request: "Maharaj! Take us into refuge." Then Shri Acharyaji bathed the two brothers again, bestowed the Name, and performed Brahmasambandh. After that, Shri Acharyaji said, "Now do Bhagavad seva." Raja Dube and Madho Dube said, "Maharaj! The Thakur of our father is with us. Our father and mother performed worship by the custom of the path of worship, and here they left their bodies. Your grace has come upon us. However you command, in that way we will do the seva." Shri Acharyaji said, "Go to the camp and bring Shri Thakurji." Then Madho Dube went and brought the casket of Thakurji. Shri Acharyaji bathed Shri Thakurji with Panchamrit and placed him upon the heads of Raja Dube and Madho Dube. And he ordered, "Free your minds from all places, restrain them, and do Bhagavad seva."

Then Raja Dube and Madho Dube prayed, "Maharaj! What is the nature of restraint (nirodh)?" Shri Acharyaji said, "Nirodh is of two kinds: one belongs to the stage of practice (sadhan–dasa), and the other belongs to the accomplished stage (siddha–dasa). The marks of nirodh in the stage of practice are these: worldly and Vedic matters do not please the mind. In the mind there remains this—'When will I do Bhagavad seva? When will I do katha–varta?' There arises a taste for this. If the mind goes a little toward the worldly, then pull it back and

engage it in seva. Understand this: by the refuge of Bhagavan alone are all tasks accomplished. This is nirodh of the stage of practice. And nirodh of the stage of fruit is this: the mind becomes naturally and perfectly set in such a disposition that, without meditation in the form of Shri Thakurji, it does not go anywhere else. One may even do worldly or Vedic tasks, but the mind, apart from Shri Thakurji, does not go anywhere else. This is the nirodh of the stage of fruit. To them, the sorrows and pleasures of this world, the many torments, do not affect. The mind remains absorbed in Shri Thakurji and in the rasa of his lila. This is the kind of nirodh."

Then Raja Dube and Madho Dube prayed, "Maharajadhiraj! For us, both kinds of nirodh are difficult. Therefore, just as you have taken us, who were drowning in the ocean of the world, by the arm and brought us into refuge, in that same way, if you grant us the gift of nirodh, then something will be accomplished for us. Otherwise, we have no ability." Seeing in this way the humility and simple nature of the two brothers, you composed the "Nirodh Lakshan," the chapter called the Nirodh–skandha in the tenth canto, and had the two brothers recite it, saying, "For you two brothers, nirodh will be accomplished." Saying this, you gave your charanamrit to the two brothers. Immediately the minds of the two brothers became extraordinary. The experience of lila–rasa began to arise. Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Now go to your home and do seva. For the one whose nirodh has arisen, much speaking and wandering in the country is not proper. Therefore go home; when divine souls come, give them the Name. For you, nirodh has been accomplished; and whoever, keeping his mind with yours, performs likewise, for him too nirodh will be accomplished."

Then Raja Dube and Madho Dube had some wealth with them; they made an offering to Shri Acharyaji and, taking leave, departed from Dwarka. They came to their village in Manund. Coming home, the two brothers began Bhagavad seva. With some wealth in the house, they sustained themselves. They did not speak much with anyone. Whoever came, upon him they had compassion and arranged for his food. Performing Bhagavad discourse, the two brothers remained absorbed in the lila–rasa of Shri Thakurji.

Prasang 1 – The Younger Brother's Transformation at the

Patel's Platform

In the village where Raja Dube and Madho Dube lived, there were also two Sanchora Brahmin brothers. The elder brother's name was Ramji and the younger brother's name was Harikrishna. Of them, the elder brother Ramji was educated. He sat on the platform before the village Patel and spoke katha. The younger brother was ignorant and guarded the elder brother's field. The elder brother Ramji had gone to another village for village affairs, so the katha stopped.

One day there was much rain. It was the winter season. The younger brother came in the evening from the field. Then the sister-in-law (bhabhi) said, "Will you eat roti?" The younger brother (devar) said, "I feel very cold. If you heat the roti for me, then I will eat." The sister-in-law said, "If you want to eat, then eat; otherwise I will go to sleep. Will you go and read katha on the Patel's platform? Or will you return the grandfather's due (graas) that has been pending for many days? If so, then I will heat roti for you. If you want to eat, then eat; otherwise I will go to sleep. Get up and go from before me."

Hearing these words of the sister-in-law, there was great pain in his mind—like an arrow struck the heart. Immediately he left the house. He thought in his mind, "Now I will give up the body. Or shall I leave this village and go to some other land?" Then in his mind came this: "In this village, Raja Dube and Madho Dube are great souls; having offered them obeisance, I will go somewhere." So he came to the house of Raja Dube and Madho Dube, offered obeisance to the two brothers, and began to weep. The two brothers said, "Who are you?" Coming near and recognizing, they said, "You are the son of so-and-so, of our community." He said, "There is no limit to my sorrow. Now I will give up the body. I have come to offer you obeisance." Madho Dube said, "Shri Thakurji is endowed with all power; he will remove sorrow. Therefore tell your sorrow." Then he told all the news: "The words my sister-in-law spoke pierce my heart. I come to your refuge. Remove my sorrow." Then the two brothers consoled him: "Shri Thakurji will make everything good." After that they brought him Mahaprasad and said, "Now go to sleep."

In the morning, Madho Dube woke him and said, "Now you come here after performing bath and Sandhya–vandan." Then he, having completed bodily duties, bathed, performed Sandhya, and came. Then Madho Dube said to Raja Dube, "Now say what should be said to him." Raja Dube said, "Your tongue has moved; you say something. This is a case of a blow from incantation (jhar). Why should we do such a thing? In the world many are sorrowful and many are happy." Madho Dube said to Raja Dube, "You are the sevak of Shri Acharyaji; he is very sorrowful—show grace on him." Raja Dube said, "If you say

so—" Then Madho Dube said, "It is not proper for me to say this task before you." Raja Dube said, "It is our command—say."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Raja Dube said, "It is a case of jhar (a bewitchment). The reason is this: he is not a divine lila-related soul; with grace he will be rescued."

Then Madho Dube seated him before the door of Shri Thakurji's temple, remembered Shri Acharyaji, and instructed him in the Ashtakshar mantra. After bestowing the Name, he had him do japa of one mala of the Ashtakshar. Then he began to speak Sanskrit. Madho Dube said to Raja Dube, "If there is permission, shall I have him do one more mala of japa?" Raja Dube said, "Certainly, have him do more japa." Then Madho Dube had him do one more mala of Ashtakshar japa. Then he began to understand the meanings of the Shri Bhagavata Purana and the shastras. Madho Dube said to Raja Dube, "If there is permission, shall I have him do one more japa?" Raja Dube said, "He is only this much of a vessel; beyond this the rasa will overflow."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): "Do not do it"—its meaning is this: if a third mala were made to be recited, the experience of lila–rasa would arise. But he is not lila-related. This much is sufficient for him.

"Afterward Raja Dube said to Madho Dube as witness: 'Do not bring this notion into your mind that we did this to him and from that this happened. All this has happened by the grace of Shri Acharyaji. Our and your true forms you know.'" Madho Dube said, "What is mine? The doer is Shri Acharyaji." After that they brought him Mahaprasad after Raj–bhog and Arti. In the third watch, Madho Dube said to him, "Go and speak katha on Patel's platform; take the book from me."

Then he took the book, offered obeisance to the two brothers, and sat on the Patel's platform and began to speak katha. Two or four Patels, seeing this, went to all the Patels and said, "The Bhattji is speaking katha—come quickly." Then all the Patels came. They said, "By the power of grace, he spoke very beautiful katha." Then all the Patels said, "You speak katha very beautifully; why do you not speak further?" He said, "My elder brother says not to; therefore I do not." Then all of them said, "Now you yourself keep speaking katha. Great is our fortune that we have obtained such a Brahmin." Then all the Patels together considered, "If Bhattji, after speaking his first katha, goes empty-handed, that is not good." Then all the Patels performed a proper worship of Bhattji. He then rose and came to Madho Dube,

placed the articles of worship before him, and prayed, “You are my guru. By your grace I have spoken katha on the Patel’s platform, and all the Patels have become pleased.”

Madho Dube said, “Do not speak thus again. Our and your guru is Shri Acharyaji. We give the Name by his command. Therefore all this wealth is his. When Shri Acharyaji arrives, make an offering to him and become his sevak.” He said, “Where shall I keep it? You know best—do accordingly.” Then Madho Dube kept the offerings. Just then Jagannath Josi and Ramdas were going from Adel to take the darshan of Shri Acharyaji; with them he sent the offerings to Shri Acharyaji. After that, he kept speaking katha daily on Patel's platform.

In a few days, the elder brother returned. Then he came and said to Madho Dube, “If there is permission, the grandfather’s due (graas), pending for many days in the village, I will go and collect it.” Madho Dube said, “Now whatever work you do will be accomplished. It is the grace of Shri Acharyaji; therefore you go.”

Then, taking permission from the two brothers and offering obeisance, he went to that village. There the Rajputs rose, fell at his feet, and said, “Great is our fortune that you have come.” Afterward, they gave him a beautiful place to stay. They gave provisions and had the cooking done. Then, in the night, when all had gathered, they called him and said, “Tell us some katha.” Then, reciting one shloka, he explained its meaning to all. All became very pleased. They said, “Bhattji is very capable.” Then they said, “Stay here for five nights; afterward we will bid you farewell.” All together they considered, “How shall we bid Bhattji farewell? The son of our hereditary priest has come after many days. His graas has been pending for many days; the debt to the Brahmin should not remain.”

“Therefore, let us give one hundred maunds of grain, and set aside one hundred rupees, and rewrite the land deed in his name. In this way, he will be free from future debt to the Brahmin upon us.” Then all said, “Very good.” After that they gave one hundred rupees cash and one hundred maunds of grain—everyone together. He said, “Send the grain to my house.” Then they loaded it on carts and sent carts along. And they rewrote a new document and said, “We are the landlords; year by year, come and take your graas.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why? When the debt to a Brahmin increases greatly, then it cannot be given later. After that they gave new garments. They also gave one cow and one buffalo with good milk, with attendants, and sent them along. Taking these, he

came to his house. When he came to the door of his house, he called to his sister-in-law, “I have also spoken katha on the Patel’s platform, and I have also brought back the grandfather’s graas. Now open the door.” Then the sister-in-law opened the shutters. Seeing his radiance, she was astonished. Afterward, the elder brother saw that on his face the radiance of Bhagavan was shining. Then, fearful, he said, “Brother! Come inside.”

He bowed to his sister-in-law and said, “You have given me instruction. Shri Thakurji has fulfilled my wish. I have spoken katha on the Patel’s platform and have also brought back the grandfather’s graas.” Then the brother and sister-in-law both were afraid, thinking, “Grace of Bhagavan has come upon him; if he gives a curse we will be reduced to ash.” Then the brother and sister-in-law said, “Bathe, eat something!” He said, “I will first offer obeisance to Raja Dube and Madho Dube; then I will do anything.” The elder brother said, “Why go first to them?” He said, “You know my true form—this is all their grace. What is there in me?” Then the elder brother went along, thinking, “If they show grace on me, that will be good.”

The two brothers came and offered obeisance to Raja Dube and Madho Dube. Then the younger brother narrated everything, placed one hundred rupees and the garments before them, and said, “There are one hundred maunds of grain—keep them.” Madho Dube said, “Sell the grain and make it into money; all this is for Shri Acharyaji. What is there of ours or yours in this?” Raja Dube said to Madho Dube, “Do not speak in this way to the other brother.” After that the elder brother prayed, “As you have shown grace to my younger brother, so show grace to me also. I am in your refuge.” Then Madho Dube said to Raja Dube, “He is making this request.” Raja Dube said, “I had already told you—do not get entangled with jhar. Therefore, now, whatever you must do, at least bestow the Name upon him.” Then they bathed the elder brother and bestowed the Name. After that they sold the grain and turned it into money.

In a few days, Shri Acharyaji came to Dwarka. He stayed at the house of Rana Vyas in Siddhpur. Raja Dube and Madho Dube received the news. Taking the two brothers with them, taking all the offerings, they came to Siddhpur. Offering full prostrations to Shri Acharyaji, they made the offerings and narrated everything about the two brothers. Afterward, they prayed, “Maharaj! Bestow the Name upon these two brothers.” Then Shri Acharyaji bestowed the Name upon the two brothers. After that he went to Dwarka. Then Raja Dube and Madho Dube brought the two brothers home with them. Along with Raja Dube and Madho Dube, the two Sanchoras were made successful. Thus

Raja Dube and Madho Dube are such Bhagavad-related ones. Up to this point their story is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): And Raja Dube and Madho Dube attained nirodh. The extraordinary feeling of their hearts, related to lila, cannot be described.

Varta 36 - Uttamshlokdas

Now the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Uttamshlokdas, a Sanchora Brahmin—the sentiment of his story is being told.

Prasang 1 – Kitchen Seva at Shrinathji

Uttamshlokdas used to cook for the sevaks of Shrinathji. He himself served everyone with affection. All the Vaishnavs addressed him as "mother." Uttamshlokdas had great affection for the sevaks. Therefore Shri Gusainji remained very pleased with him.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Uttamshlokdas and Ishvar Dube, in the lila, are companions of Shri Chandravaliji. In them there is much sattvic sentiment. Shri Chandravaliji, with love, would have the items served to Shri Chandravaliji herself and to all the other companions. At one time Shri Chandravaliji invited Shri Thakurji and Shri Swaminiji to her bower. Shri Chandravaliji herself was serving both forms. Then pride arose in the minds of these two companions: "We serve all the companions daily; today both the forms have arrived. If we serve them, it will be good." They did not ask Shri Chandravaliji and, lifting another thali, started off. Just then Shri Chandravaliji came and said, "Where are you going?" They said with pride, "Why should we not serve Shri Thakurji?" Shri Chandravaliji said, "Here, pride has no place. Fall to the earth." Thus, these two fell to the earth and took many births. In the lila, one's name is Sushila, the other's name is Mena. Uttamshlokdas is the manifestation of Sushila, and in Ishvar Dube the companion named Mena manifested.

Now, in Gujarat, in Godhra, both took birth in Sanchora families. Both of them did the cooking for a Kayastha. That Kayastha went to Agra, to the lord of the land. Then these two came. Shri Acharyaji had arrived in Agra. On the bank of Shri Yamunaji at Rajghat he was performing Sandhyavandan. At that time Uttamshlokdas and Ishvar Dube had come to bathe in Shri Yamunaji and were bathing. Having finished Sandhyavandan, Shri Acharyaji said these words to Krishnadas: "Being Brahmins, it is not proper to do service for a Shudra. It is proper if a Shudra serves a Brahmin—so it is said in the Shri Bhagavata."

Hearing this, Uttamshlokdas and Ishvar Dube said, "Maharaj! What

you say is true. But for the sake of our stomachs we serve a Shudra. What else can we do? And we have no other skills; we have not studied. Therefore, by cooking for a Shudra we make our living." Shri Acharyaji said, "I am not speaking about you. I am speaking to my sevaks. And Ishvar nourishes and sustains all. One should have faith in Ishvar." Then both of them prayed, "Maharaj! You have spoken according to the shastras, but here such is our situation. So make us sevaks. Teach us, and we will do as you tell us—so that service to the Shudra will be given up."

Shri Acharyaji said, "You too are Brahmins, you are worthy. How will you become sevaks?" Both said, "Maharaj! In what way are we Brahmins? We do not know the actions of a Brahmin. Therefore show us grace and take us into refuge—so that we may gain some higher understanding." Shri Vallabhacharyaji said, "Come forward." In this way he called the two and bestowed the Name and initiation. Then the two brothers prayed, "Now give us an order, and we will do it." Shri Acharyaji said, "Go to your village, take leave of your mother and father, and come to Govardhan mountain. There do the seva of Shri Govardhandhar."

Then both together settled accounts with Kayastha, took their money, and left. That Kayastha urged them very much to stay, and even said he would increase their pay by the month, but they did not stay. From there they left and came to their own homes in Godhra. They said to their mother and father, "If you give us permission, we will go." The mother and father said, "Stay some days; we too will go along with you." In the minds of the parents was this—that by saying thus, they would keep their sons. In this way twelve months passed.

Then the two said to their parents, "Will you go? A year has passed." They said, "Now we will go." Thus five years passed. Then Uttamshlokdas, without informing his mother and father or anyone else, set out for Govardhan. Having the darshan of Shrinathji, offering full prostrations to Shri Gusainji, he narrated his entire situation. Then Shri Gusainji gave him the kitchen seva of Shri Govardhandhar. He served all the sevaks with great affection. All the sevaks addressed Uttamshlokdas as "mother." Thus, he is such a grace-filled Bhagavad-related one of Shri Acharyaji.

Varta 37 - Ishvar Dube

Now, about the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Ishvar Dube, a Sanchora Brahmin—the sentiment of his story is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): His form in the lila has already been described above. And the manner in which he, in Agra, became a sevak has also been described above. When Uttamshlokdas came, after six months Ishvar Dube's mother and father left their bodies. Then Ishvar Dube came to Giriraj, had the darshan of Shrinathji, offered prostrations to Shri Gusainji, and narrated everything fully: "We both, Uttamshlokdas and I, have become sevaks together. And this is the command of Shri Acharyaji—that we should serve Shri Govardhandhar. So now, give us your order, and we will do so accordingly." Then Shri Gusainji said, "Uttamshlokdas does the cooking for Shrinathji and serves the sevaks. So you both together quickly begin the seva." Thus the two began the seva.

Prasang 1 – Name Bestowed and Seva of Uttamshlokdas

After some days, when Uttamshlokdas left his body, then Shri Gusainji gave the name Uttamshlokdas to Ishvar Dube. So this Uttamshlokdas did the cooking of Shri Govardhandhar and served all the sevaks. And from his own bundle he served more ghee.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): From this it is shown—if a sevak only takes his allowance, then what seva is there in that? If from his own bundle he offers from his own resources, that is seva. With this feeling he served. And he served ghee in the food, the reason being this: by ghee the whole body gains strength, so that the seva of the Lord may be done properly and without fatigue. Therefore, in addition to the given portion, he served ghee.

Thus, all the sevaks addressed him as "mother." This matter the Vaishnavs reported to Shri Gusainji. Hearing this, Shri Gusainji, very pleased with Uttamshlokdas, called him close and asked, "From your own bundle you procure ghee and serve ghee to the sevaks? Don't all the sevaks already receive their allowance?" Then Uttamshlokdas said,

“Maharaj! In seva the sevaks undergo much exertion. They climb the mountain, they descend. Thus the mind of Shri Thakurji may become distressed. Therefore, if they take more ghee, the body will have strength and the sevaks will serve well. For this reason I serve more ghee.” Hearing this, Shri Gusainji became very pleased—that he has such affection for the sevaks.

Then Shri Gusainji said, “Uttamshlokdas! Ask something from me. I have become very pleased with you.” Then Uttamshlokdas said, “Maharaj! May I never become displeased with you—that is what I ask.” Then Shri Gusainji said, “So it shall be.”

Then all, hearing this, said, “What did he ask? If a soul is pleased, what is that? If displeased, what is that? The Lord should be pleased.” Then one Vaishnav prayed to Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! What has this Uttamshlokdas asked—that I may always remain pleased with you?” Then Shri Gusainji said, “This matter you ask from Uttamshlokdas himself—what has he asked?” Then all the Vaishnavs together asked Uttamshlokdas, “What have you asked—that I may remain pleased with you?”

Then Uttamshlokdas said, “I asked this: now, at this time, Shri Gusainji is pleased; but at some time, if during seva some fault occurs and he becomes displeased, then my mind would become disturbed and I would have no steadiness. Therefore I asked—that even if you become displeased, yet my mind may not become disturbed.” Hearing this, all the Vaishnavs became pleased. Then Shri Gusainji said to all the Vaishnavs, “Uttamshlokdas has asked with great insight. Now his mind will never become disturbed.”

So Uttamshlokdas was such a Bhagavad-related one. With constant, one-flavored love he remained steadfast in Shri Thakurji, in Shri Gusainji, in the sevaks, and in the Vaishnavs. Therefore, up to here is told his story.

Varta 38 - Vasudevdas Chhakda

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Vasudevdas Chhakda, a Saraswat Brahmin, resident of Singhanand – their story is being narrated.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Vasudevdas was the chief attendant of Shri Nandrayaji. Wherever Nandrayaji went, Vasudevdas carried his clothes and vessels along with him. In the divine play, his name is “Mansukha.” Vasudevdas was born in Singhanand in the house of a Saraswat Brahmin. That Saraswat had much wealth. When Vasudevdas was thirteen years old, the ruler imposed a penalty in Singhanand and collected from everyone. A fine of two thousand was laid upon the father of Vasudevdas. Then Vasudevdas said to his father, “Why should we give the ruler’s fine? We will fight the ruler.” Then the father of Vasudevdas said, “How will we fight the ruler?” Then Vasudevdas said, “This matter I have understood. Tell me about it.”

Then four of the ruler’s soldiers came. Vasudevdas said to them, “Why should we give the fine? Tell the ruler, if he wants to fight, then we will fight. But we will not give the fine.” Then those four soldiers began to abuse him saying, “We will catch you and take you.” Then Vasudevdas snatched their weapons and gave them such a push that all four fell far away. Afterwards they went and complained to the ruler, “Vasudevdas the Brahmin beat us and snatched away our weapons. He also said he will fight the ruler.” Then the ruler became filled with anger and sent forty soldiers. And he ordered, “At once, bind that Brahmin and bring him.”

When Vasudevdas saw the forty soldiers approaching, he rushed among them. He snatched someone’s turban, someone’s weapon, struck someone with his fist, kicked someone else, and made all fall to the ground. He tied their weapons with turbans, five or ten in one bundle, and brought all the weapons home. Then all of them went and cried before the ruler, “He is just a thirteen or fourteen-year-old boy, but he has snatched our weapons and tied all of us. Therefore, this boy is not a human being, but some deity. Therefore, be cautious.” Then the ruler sent five or six good men with him. And in his heart, the ruler himself became afraid.

In front of the gate in the lane, a cart was placed crosswise, blocking

the path. On that cart was placed a stone slab weighing a thousand mans. The ruler, with twenty soldiers, sat armed. When Vasudevdas saw those five or six soldiers, he tied a cloth around his waist, took a big stick, entirely covered in iron, weighing two mans. He took it and ran into the middle of the soldiers, swinging the stick. In one swing, fifty to sixty soldiers fell one upon another. Just like the wheel of a potter spins, in ten to fifteen turns he made them all fall. Then Vasudevdas, filled with the fury of anger, ran where the ruler was. He saw the cart with the stone of a thousand mans and with one hand pushed it and lifted it. The cart and the stones fell scattered here and there. The cart broke into pieces, and there was great noise of the falling stones. Then the ruler with his twenty soldiers fled and jumped into the Saraswati River and ran far away. Then Vasudevdas tore down the ruler's platform and returned to his home.

Later that night, the ruler returned home and called two or four good men of Singhanand, sarrafs and merchants, and said to them, "Go to the house of Vasudevdas and make peace. If I made a mistake, you take the fine from me. Now you tell me—shall I continue to rule here or shall I go to another village? From today onward, I will never say anything to you." Then those men told Vasudevdas all the words of the ruler. Then Vasudevdas said, "What do we have to do with the ruler? Let him stay." Then the ruler remained. The next day the ruler himself came to Vasudevdas and said, "You are not a human being, you are some deity. Please have mercy on me. If you need any work done, tell me. And you lifted that cart and threw it away. From that day, all the people of the village began calling him Vasudevdas Chhakda (Cart)."

So Vasudevdas' pride increased greatly, and he would not care for anyone in the village. If someone abused him, all remained silent. At one time Shri Acharyaji came to Thaneswar. Krishnadas Meghan was bathing in the Saraswati River, and by fortune Vasudevdas also came to bathe from Singhanand. Vasudevdas splashed water which fell upon Krishnadas Meghan. Then Krishnadas Meghan said, "Who are you? You came sprinkling? Therefore bathe properly from a distance. Everyone's splashes fall upon you." Hearing these words of Krishnadas, Vasudevdas raised his hand to strike him. But with the strength of Shri Acharyaji's grace, Krishnadas Meghan held both hands of Vasudevdas.

Vasudevdas tried with much strength, but his hands did not become free. Then he accepted defeat in his heart. Afterwards he asked, "Who are you?" Then Krishnadas Meghan said, "I am a sevak of Shri Vallabhacharyaji, who is the manifest Purushottam Himself."

Afterwards Krishnadas Meghan asked, “Who are you?” Then Vasudevdas said, “I am a Saraswat Brahmin. I had great pride in my heart that none is equal in strength to me. I defeated the ruler along with five hundred soldiers, and I lifted a cart of a thousand mans. But my hands you held easily, and even with much effort they did not become free. Therefore, such is your influence. Then how great must your Master be? Therefore, I will go with you and have darshan of Shri Acharyaji.”

Then Krishnadas released his hands. Both bathed and went before Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Damodardas, “See, Damla! One whose hand is held by a devotee of the Lord, he is lifted across the world. Krishnadas easily held the hand of Vasudevdas – what can be said about his fortune?” Then Vasudevdas came and prostrated to Shri Acharyaji and afterwards prayed, “Maharaj! Take me into your shelter.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “You have much pride in your heart. Coming into our shelter, what will you do? In our shelter comes humility.” Then Vasudevdas said, “Maharaj! Now I do not want pride. Pride brings destruction. The arrogant do not perceive the Lord. I committed an offense against Krishnadas. But when the Lord held my hands, my pride went away. Now please show mercy, so that my birth becomes fruitful. And your manifestation is for the deliverance of the lowly ones like me.”

Then Shri Acharyaji gave Vasudevdas the Name Initiation and said, “Your name will be Vasudevdas Chhakda. Before, you were intoxicated with pride, now you will be intoxicated with the nectar of the Lord, therefore Chhakda. And since your five senses will be controlled and detached from worldly objects, therefore your name will be Chhakda. And the six divine qualities—(1) strength, (2) fame, (3) wealth, (4) knowledge, (5) detachment, (6) righteousness—all these which reside in Shri Thakurji will also reside in you. Therefore, the name Chhakda.” In this way, giving grace and blessings, Shri Acharyaji placed all virtues in his heart. His mind was absorbed in Manasi Seva, therefore external seva was not placed upon him.

Then Vasudevdas said, “Maharaj! Please come to Singhanand and take my parents into your shelter.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “We will not cross the Saraswati River. Therefore, we will not go to Singhanand. You bring those who have faith to become sevaks, and tell them this is my instruction.” Then Vasudevdas, prostrating to Shri Acharyaji, came to Singhanand and said to his parents, “Shri Vallabhacharyaji has come to Thaneswar. He is the very form of the Lord Himself. Therefore, you become sevaks. I have come as his sevak.” Then his parents said, “We will go tomorrow morning. Today we have already

eaten."

In the neighborhood lived a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, Kshatriyanis. The mother-in-law's name was Gorja, the daughter-in-law's name was Samrai. Hearing this, they asked Vasudevdas, "Where will you take your parents tomorrow morning?" Then Vasudevdas explained in full how he became a sevak: "I was an arrogant and wicked person, but I was accepted." Then the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law said, "Tomorrow morning, take us also with you." Afterwards, this news spread in Singhanand that in Thaneswar, Shri Vallabhacharyaji, the great Mahapurush, had come. Even Vasudevdas Chhakda, such an arrogant man, has become humbled. Therefore, the whole village went to Thaneswar for darshan. Many received names, many offered themselves. In Thaneswar also many became sevaks.

Then in the morning Vasudevdas bathed his parents and the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law in the Saraswati River and brought them before Shri Acharyaji. They had darshan and bowed down. Afterwards Vasudevdas prayed, "Maharaj! These are my parents, please take them into your shelter. And this mother-in-law and daughter-in-law live in Singhanand. The husband of the daughter-in-law has died. Therefore, these two are in your shelter." Then Shri Acharyaji gave them Name Initiation and gave names to the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, and to the parents of Vasudevdas as well.

Then Vasudevdas prayed to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, "Maharaj! Please grant Brahmasambandh to my parents." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "They have only this much eligibility. They cannot do a full offering. But by your relation they will be liberated." Then the mother-in-law prayed, "Maharaj! Now what is our duty? Kindly tell us." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Do Bhagavad Seva." Then the mother-in-law prayed, "Maharaj! Please grant us seva now." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Go to the Saraswati River, there you will obtain the form of the Lord, bring it." Then the mother-in-law went to the Saraswati, and saw on the riverbank a Thakur seated. Seeing Him, she became very joyful and brought Him to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji performed Panchamrit and placed the Thakur on the heads of the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. He gave the Thakurji the name "Shri Damodarji." Afterwards he said, "Go home and do seva." Then the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law returned home. The mother-in-law was clever and did seva. The daughter-in-law was simple, so she only assisted externally. Their story will be told later, along with the form of their divine play.

Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji said to Vasudevdas, "Now take your

parents home." Then Vasudevdas said, "My heart wishes to remain with you." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Now you take your parents home and live in the village. Afterwards, when your parents' bodies leave in a few days, then you come and stay in our house." Then Vasudevdas bowed and took his parents to Singhanand. Shri Acharyaji went forward on his pilgrimage around the earth.

Prasang 1 – The Golden Bowl and Delivering the Mohurs

And at one time Shri Acharyaji was residing in Adel. Then one day the bhandari - sevak who oversaw the bhandar (food provisions) reported to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! Today in the bhandar there are not any sidho (provisions) left." Then Shri Acharyaji brought a golden bowl from the temple of Shri Thakurji and gave it. And he said, "Bring the provisions sufficient for today up to Rajbhog; do not bring more than necessary. Keep this bowl in pledge with the merchant (bania) there and come back." Then the bhandari, taking the golden bowl, kept it with the merchant there and brought all the provisions for Rajbhog. Afterwards, preparing the offerings, he offered bhog to Shri Thakurji; at the proper time, after completing the bhog, he performed the aarti and did the anusar (concluding procedures). The Mahaprasad was placed in Shri Yamunaji. And the rest was fed to the cows. You (Shri Acharyaji) and all the attendants together with all the sevaks remained sitting hungry.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Thus this taught a lesson to the Vaishnav, that a Vaishnav must not take what belongs to Shri Thakurji; This rule was taught to everyone.

And here, all the Vaishnavs of Singhanand together made a contribution of thirty mohurs as Shri Acharyaji's offering (bhet) and gave it to Vasudevdas Chhakda, saying, "If the bhet can be delivered to Shri Acharyaji, then good."

Then Vasudevdas, adopting the guise of a vairagi (renunciate), made the entire sum of mohurs into a lump of lac like a Shaligram, and, applying sandalwood paste, set out. From Singhanand he went and stayed at Thaneswar, and took Mahaprasad in the house of Vaishnavs. From Thaneswar he went and stayed at Delhi for the night; he took Mahaprasad in the house of Vaishnavs. From Delhi he went and stayed at Mathura; he took Mahaprasad in the house of Vaishnavs. From Mathura he went and stayed at Agra for the night; he took Mahaprasad in the houses of Vaishnavs. On the way, thieves and thugs

met him, but they thought that he was a renunciate (vairagi) going about his business worshiping a form of Vishnu (Shaligram).

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): When there is so much strength in the body of Vasudevdas, why did he have to do all of this? Because he knew that this was Shri Acharyaji's wealth; if somewhere on the way he were to fall asleep, then someone might steal it. Face-to-face, no one had the capability to take it. And for the sake of service to the Guru, by making the arrangement in the manner of a Shaligram, he took it along, and so he did not bring to mind any offense to Bhagavan. Thus it is shown that when doing the work of the Guru, however it may be done, service to the Guru should be accomplished. From that, offense to Bhagavan does not become an obstacle. Remaining fearful of committing offense to the Guru while in Bhagavad-seva—this is indicated.

Afterwards, from Agra he set out, and for two days he managed with chabena (dry snacks). On the third day, in the third watch, on the very day when Shri Acharyaji had remained sitting hungry, he came to Adel. Coming to the outskirts of the village, he broke open the lump of lac, took out the mohurs, came and gave them to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, and placed the thirty mohurs in front. He made a request to Mahaprabhu, "Maharaj! This is the offering from the Vaishnavs of Singhanand." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Vasudevdas! How did you bring so many mohurs—there are many?" Then Vasudevdas said, "Maharaj! I will not tell you this; if you hear it, you will be displeased." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "We will be pleased with you; we will not be displeased. Tell me how you brought them." Then Vasudevdas told everything in full detail, that he made a lump of lac and, applying sandalwood paste, brought it. Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "Do not do this. Having made the form of the Bhagavad-svarup, afterwards one has to do otherwise (i.e., it becomes improper)." Then Vasudevdas said, "Maharaj! There had not been any consecration performed. It was a lump of lac that was tied." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "Even so, do not do this." Afterwards, calling the bhandari, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu gave him the thirty mohurs. And he said, "Bring provisions (samagri) required from morning (mangala) until shayan (bedtime) and bring back the bowl by redeeming it." Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, reaching Thakurjis seva uptill shayan (bedtime), did the anusar of Shri Thakurji and himself took his meal. Thereafter, Shri Akkaji and all the attendants took their meals. Then the vessel of Mahaprasad was placed before Vasudevdas, and all the sevaks and Vaishnavs took Mahaprasad.

Afterwards, writing the receipt of the delivery of the thirty mohurs, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu sent off Vasudevdas the next day. Then Vasudevdas, in a few days, reached Singhanand and gave the letter to the Vaishnavs. Then all the Vaishnavs became pleased and asked Vasudevdas, “How did you carry so many mohurs so far? The road is not so safe. There is much fear of thugs and thieves, is there not?” Then Vasudevdas told those Vaishnavs everything in full detail. Then all the Vaishnavs began to praise Vasudevdas.

Prasang 2 – Delivering One Hundred Mohurs to Adel

And at another time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu’s elder son, Shri Gopinathji, came to Agra. There was a contribution of one hundred mohurs for Shri Gusainji, which the Vaishnavs gave to Shri Gopinathji. Just then Vasudevdas Chhakda came to Agra from Singhanand. At that time Shri Gopinathji said, “Is there such a Vaishnav who can deliver these one hundred mohurs to Adel?” Then Vasudevdas said, “Maharaj! Give them to me; I will deliver them.” Then Gopinathji wrote a letter to Shri Gusainji and gave the one hundred mohurs to Vasudevdas Chhakda. Then Vasudevdas, in the same way, made a lump of lac, applied sandalwood paste, adopted the guise of a vairagi, and set out, taking chabeni for the journey. On the third day he reached Adel and took out the mohurs from the lac. He came to Shri Gusainji, paid obeisance, gave the letter of Shri Gopinathji, and placed the one hundred mohurs in front. Then Shri Gusainji read the letter, gathered the mohurs, and gave them to the bhandari. Afterwards he had Mahaprasad brought for Vasudevdas. Then the next day, Shri Gusainji himself wrote the receipt for the delivery of the mohurs and gave it to Vasudevdas. Then Vasudevdas paid obeisance to Shri Gusainji and set out from Adel. On the third day he came to Agra and gave Shri Gusainji’s letter to Shri Gopinathji. Then Shri Gopinathji read that letter and became very pleased with Vasudevdas. Afterwards he asked, “Vasudevdas! How did you carry so many mohurs alone on the way? Tell us in detail.” Then Vasudevdas told everything in full to Shri Gopinathji. Then Shri Gopinathji said to Vasudevdas, “Do not ever do like this.” Then Vasudevdas Chhakda remained silent.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Thus, this is the command of propriety, that a fault is incurred. But for the sake of the Guru’s work, what fault is there in this? In this way, Vasudevdas knew a Pushti (grace-filled) task to be supreme above all. Therefore he served in this manner.

Prasang 3 – Basant Panchami Supplies and Mahaprasad

And at another time Shri Gusainji was residing in Shri Mathura. After having reached Rajbhog with Shri Thakurji and having himself taken food, he came to the sitting place. Then in Agra, Rupchand Nanda is Shri Gusainji's sevak; Shri Gusainji wrote a letter to him. In that, he asked for the provisions for Basant Panchami. Afterwards, calling Vasudevdas, he gave him the letter and said, "Bring this much provision from Agra from Rupchand Nanda and return by evening.

Then Shri Gusaiji called for a basket of Mahaprasad" He made a shoulder-sling bag out of a sheet, put it around the neck of Vasudevdas, and filled it with Mahaprasad. Then Vasudevdas made a request to Shri Gusainji, "Maharaj! Wearing a pair of shoes, how should I carry Mahaprasad?" Then Shri Gusainji said, "There is no fault for you; you are going for Shri Thakurji's seva, so wearing the pair of shoes, carry the Prasad with joy and set out."

Then taking the Prasad, Vasudevdas set out from Mathura. Coming to Agra, he went to the house of Rupchand Nanda. At that time Rupchand Nanda, having taken Mahaprasad, was washing his hands. Seeing Vasudevdas Chhakda, he greeted him and said in the house, "Put a big pot on the stove and start the cooking." Then Vasudevdas said, "I will not remain there until the cooking is done. Read the letter and have the provisions given to me; I will now go to Mathura."

Then Rupchand Nanda placed Shri Gusainji's letter on his head, read it, and said to his brother, "Whatever dried Mahaprasad there is in the house, put all of it into one basket." Having said this, he came to the gate with the basket. Then Rupchand Nanda came with Vasudevdas to the market and began to purchase and give the fine clothes and other provisions suitable for Basant. Then Vasudevdas said, "My hands are sanctified by Prasad; therefore you tie them on my back." Then Rupchand Nanda tied all the provisions on the back of Vasudevdas and, writing a letter, gave it to him.

Coming with Vasudevdas to the four-crossroads gate, his brother took the basket of Mahaprasad and filled Vasudevdas's sling-bag, and afterwards, bidding him farewell, the two brothers returned home. And taking the Mahaprasad, Vasudevdas set out from Agra. Then, when it was the third watch, Shri Gusainji, having awakened from rest, washed his face and was seated on the seat; at that very time Vasudevdas came and stood. Afterwards, he made a request to Shri

Gusainji, “Maharaj! My hands are sanctified by Prasad, and the provisions are tied on my back.” Then Shri Gusainji, pleased, himself rose and untied the provisions from the back of Vasudevdas. Afterwards, taking and reading the letter of Rupchand Nanda, Shri Gusainji became pleased. Afterwards, Shri Gusainji said from his own mouth to Vasudevdas, “Vasudevdas! A vessel of Mahaprasad has been kept covered for you. Go inside and take Mahaprasad.” Then Vasudevdas bathed and took Mahaprasad. Afterwards, Shri Gusainji prepared all the provisions. In the morning it was Basant Panchami, so the festival was performed. Darshan was given to Vasudevdas. Thus Vasudevdas remained engaged in seva in this manner.

Prasang 4 – Confrontation at the Janmasthan and the Kazi’s

Apology

And after completing seva, Shri Gusainji said to the attendants, “Take the seat, basket, and the articles for Sandhyavandan, and let us go to Vishrant Ghat.” Then you yourself, along with ten or five Vaishnavs and with Vasudevdas Chhakda, would daily go to Vishrant Ghat. There, after Shri Gusainji performed Sandhyavandan, he would then go for daily darshan of Shri Kesorai ji at the Janmasthan. So one day, the Mathuriya Chaubes together went to the Kazi and, speaking ill of Shri Gusainji, said, “If you have him seized and confined for a day or two, then his sevaks are such that they will give you thousands of rupees.” Then the Kazi, taking along two or so armed men, waited a little near the Janmasthan. When Shri Gusainji, having taken the darshan of Shri Kesorai ji, came out, the Kazi’s men became alert. Then Vasudevdas humbly said to Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! Their looks seem ill-intentioned.” Then Shri Gusainji said, “What will they do to you? We have no enmity with them; therefore let us proceed.” Then Vasudevdas went ahead. Then the Kazi’s men came near and said, “Where will you go now?” Then Vasudevdas again made a humble request to Shri Gusainji and said, “Maharaj! These have come with evil intent.” Then Shri Gusainji said, “Do with them whatever needs to be done.” Then, walking four steps ahead, Vasudevdas gave a single slap to one who had a shield and a mace. At the very touch of that slap he fell down. Then, taking his shield and mace, Vasudevdas felled twenty to twenty-five men. Then all fled and, together with the Kazi, went inside a large mansion and fastened the doors. Then Vasudevdas said to Shri Gusainji, “Well, they have all gathered and are crammed into one house. If you say so, I will bring down the walls of the

mansion from all four sides; all will be crushed and die." Then Shri Gusainji said, "Do not do so; what harm have they done to you? Let us go to Vishrant." Then Shri Gusainji went to Vishrant, performed Sandhyavandan, and returned home. Afterwards, the next day, when Shri Gusainji went for darshan at the Janmasthan, the Kazi, taking two or four men along, with a scarf around his neck, humbly said to Shri Gusainji, "Maharaj! Forgive my offense. People spoke ill of you to me; now I will explain to them that they are making me set Kanhaiya and Bhima to fight. You are verily Kanhaiya who saves all these. Otherwise, this Bhima will kill everyone. But now please give me some light instruction." Then Shri Gusainji said, "Those who spoke ill, say nothing to them because of that." Then Kazi, having made his humble request, went away. And he said in his heart, "See, the wicked spoke ill of him, and he, Kanhaiya, is so compassionate that he has mercy even on an enemy." Thus Vasudevdas was such a recipient of grace.

Prasang 5 – Inviting Vasudevdas to Festivals

And in Singhanand, when there was a great festival in the houses of Vaishnavs, then they would invite Vasudevdas for Mahaprasad. And for small festivals they would invite ten or twenty Vaishnavs. In that, they would not invite Vasudevdas. Then, after some days, all the Vaishnavs of Singhanand came to Shri Gokul for darshan of Shri Gusainji. Then Vasudevdas made a humble request to Shri Gusainji and said, "Maharaj! These Vaishnavs do not invite me to festival kirtans." Then Shri Gusainji said to those Vaishnavs, "Why do you not invite Vasudevdas to festival kirtans? He is a recipient of the grace of Shri Acharyaji, belonging to Bhagavan; how can things proceed without inviting him?" Then the Vaishnavs humbly said to Shri Gusainji, "We do invite him for the great festivals; and in small festivals, if a single person takes the provisions for ten to twenty Vaishnavs, then he remains hungry, and thus an offense arises; therefore we do not invite." Then Shri Gusainji said, "Set a rule: if there is a wish to invite two hundred Vaishnavs, then invite a hundred, and among the hundred let there be Vasudevdas. And if there is a wish to invite a hundred, then fifty, and among the fifty let there be Vasudevdas. If there is a wish to invite fifty, then twenty-five, and among the twenty-five let there be Vasudevdas. And if there is a wish to invite ten, then five, and among the five let there be Vasudevdas. Up to ten, invite him. And if you invite five, then do not invite him." Then the Vaishnavs said, "Maharaj! If he remains hungry, it will be an offense." Then Shri Gusainji said, "In this there is no offense for you; do in this manner." From then on, the Vaishnavs of

Shri Singhanand began inviting Vasudevdas to the festivals.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that when the one belonging to Bhagavan is invited, then all come. When one belonging to Bhagavan comes, Shri Thakurji becomes pleased quickly.

Prasang 6 – Offerings from Agra during Pitru Paksha

And many of Vasudevdas's yajmans (patron households) lived in Agra. So, in Pitru Paksha, Vasudevdas would go to Agra, and he would accept invitations from all the Kshatriyas. In all their houses he took Mahaprasad. He took dhoti, upper cloth, and bolts of cloth, and dakshina, and after making a round of fifteen days, when Pitru Paksha was over, then with the dakshina money he brought chowries and sugar, came to Shri Gokul, and gave them into the bhandar. And all the cloths he distributed everywhere: new cloths for screening, temple vestments, wiping cloths for the kitchen, bhandar, betel room, flower room, etc. Then, seeing new cloths everywhere, Shri Gusainji asked, "From where did new cloths come in all places at the same time?" Then all the sevaks said, "Maharaj! Vasudevdas has brought them; he has done this." Then Shri Gusainji asked Vasudevdas, "From where did you bring these new cloths?" Then Vasudevdas said, "Maharaj! In Agra, Kshatriyas, my yajmans, live. So, in Pitru Paksha, I go there and stay for fifteen days, taking Mahaprasad in their houses. They give dakshina and cloth. So with the dakshina I bring chowries and sugar and give them to the bhandar, and with the cloth I make the screens, etc." Then Shri Gusainji, pleased, said, "See, the work belonging to Bhagavan has been applied in the alaukik (otherworldly) realm." Afterwards, year by year, when Shri Gusainji saw new screens, wiping cloths, and temple vestments everywhere, he would ask, "Would Vasudevdas have done this?" Then all the sevaks said, "Vasudevdas has brought them from Agra." Thus Shri Gusainji remained very pleased with Vasudevdas.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that if something is given to one belonging to Bhagavan, a Vaishnav, for the sake of worldly Vedic rites, then the one belonging to Bhagavan makes it alaukik (otherworldly). The (yajmans) of Agra gave in the name of shraddha after performing shraddha. And Vasudevdas had it accepted into the house of Shri Gusainji. In that, those Kshatriyas too became fulfilled. And their ancestors too became fulfilled. Thus, in the heart of Vasudevdas there was such firm refuge in Bhagavan that he did not bring worldly matters into mind. In the name of shraddha he too took Mahaprasad. Taking what was related to shraddha, he would make it alaukik. However, nothing became an obstacle for him. With such Bhagavad-strength, he always carried out the affairs of the Lila of Nandalaya. Here he served Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, then experienced the nectar of Lila. However, he did not have the

experience of Nikunja-lal; it is of the Lila of Nandalaya, therefore he had the experience of the Lila of Nandalaya. Thus Vasudevdas Chhakda is such that he belongs to Bhagavan; therefore, on his head Shri Thakurji was not placed; even in the Lila, bringing things and materials, he would give them to Shri Yashodaji.

Prasang 7 – Journeying with Loads Like a Cart

And when Shri Gusainji set out to foreign regions, then Vasudevdas would go along. He would carry the load of a cart. Therefore everyone called him Vasudevdas Chhakda (Cart). Such a steadfast Vaishnav he is. Therefore, up to where should one speak of the story of Vasudevdas?

Varta 39 - Babavenu, Krishnadas and Yadavendradas

Now, about the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Babavenu the Saraswat Brahmin, Krishnadas Ghaghari the Kshatriya, and Yadavendradas the bania, Babavenu's khavas—about these three, the feeling of the account is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): They lived in a village in the east between Kashi and Prayag. There they stayed. So Babavenu and Krishnadas, these two are sakhis of Vishakhaji in the lila. In the lila, Babavenu is "Soraseni" and the name of Krishnadas is "Kamlata." And the sakhi of "Soraseni," one "Tilakni," that is Yadavdas, became the khavas of Babavenu.

So these three obtained many births, reason being such that one day Vishakhaji said, "Go from here to see the house of Shri Nandarayaji, and if Shri Thakurji has awakened then ask for clothes and bring them." So these three came to the door of Shri Nandarayaji. At that time Shri Thakurji asked the three of them, "Where is Vishakhaji?" All three said, "We do not have the news. We have come for your darshan. So whatever has to be said to Vishakhaji, give the command to us." In this way they considered the good fortune equal to that of Vishakhaji to be in themselves. Then Shri Thakurji, smiling, remained silent. He went inside to Jasodaji. These three sakhis sat at the door, thinking, "Shri Thakurji has smiled and gone inside, so he will just now come outside again." Knowing this, they sat at the door. This matter one sakhi went and told Vishakhaji! So Vishakhaji ran and came. Coming and seeing, the three are laughing amongst themselves. Then Vishakhaji gave a curse, "Take birth on earth. This is the fruit of pride."

So all three fell. Babavenu was born in the house of a Saraswat Brahmin, and became twenty-three to twenty-four years old. So Babavenu and Krishnadas, these two were the best of friends with each other, they lived together. And there was a hesitation of eating and drinking at the house of Yadavdas. So Yadavdas served as the khavasi attendant of Babavenu. This Babavenu was a worshiper of the Devi, considering the goddesses as supreme.

Then one day Shri Kalyanarayaji Thakurji said to Babavenu in a dream, “I am Kalyani Devi, I am in the pond of this village. So you take me out, worship me.” Then in the morning Babavenu told this to his friend Krishnadas; then the two persons entered the pond. The water in the whole pond was up to the chest. So while searching everywhere, Shri Kalyanarayaji came into the hands of Babavenu. Then Babavenu came out of the pond, and with the wealth that was in the house over that pond he had a small temple built, and, with the feeling of the Devi, he established the Devi. The name became Kalyani Devi. So the people of the village, knowing her as Devi, paid much respect; among them the livelihood of Babavenu and Krishnadas and Yadavdas occurred.

Doing thus, five years passed; then Shri Acharyaji was coming from Kashi toward Aadel. So he came to this village and, near the temple of Kalyanarayaji, sat beneath a mango tree. At that time Babavenu and Krishnadas had gone to a nearby village. Then from the temple, Shri Kalyanarayaji called to Shri Acharyaji, “You also come inside.” Then Shri Acharyaji, going inside the temple, saw that a lehenga and lugra were worn. Then Shri Acharyaji asked, “Why are you seated like a Devi?” Then Shri Thakurji said, “What shall I do? In this village no one knows Thakurji. And Babavenu, Krishnadas, and Yadavdas are Devi-oriented souls. For the sake of delivering them, I have become Devi and have had Babavenu perform worship of me; because Babavenu is a worshiper of the Devi.

So now you make me the form of Shri Thakurji. Sit here for four ghadi. Having accepted Babavenu, Krishnadas, Yadavdas the khavas, then proceed.” Then Shri Acharyaji removed the lehenga and lugra, placed the lehenga upon a peg, and tore the lugra to make a pardani to wear, and tied a turban. Then he came and sat beneath the mango tree. Meanwhile Babavenu and Krishnadas and Yadavdas the khavas came. So going into the temple of Shri Kalyanarayaji they saw that a turban and dhoti are worn while sitting. Then Babavenu said, “Who has come here? Who has taken off the clothes of my Devi?” Then Kalyanarayaji said, “Do not touch me. I am Kalyanarayaji Thakur.”

Then Babavenu said, “No one in this village accepts the Thakur. And what is my offense that you are not allowing even touch?” Then Shri Kalyanarayaji said, “Under the mango tree Shri Acharyaji is sitting. You become sevak and come to him. And if the people of our village do not accept the Thakur, then what use have we with the people of your and our village? In your house seven hundred rupees are buried in the lower room; take them out and perform my seva and worship. But now you go and come as the sevak of Shri Acharyaji.”

Then the three persons came to Shri Acharyaji and said, “Maharaj! Make us sevak.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “All three go and bathe in the pond and come.” Then the three went and, bathing in the pond, came to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji told the names to the three and had the self-offering (nivedan) performed. Thereafter Shri Acharyaji said to Babavenu, “Now you do one task. Take Shri Kalyanarayaji to your house and, in a hidden manner, perform seva. Let no one in the village know. And in this temple of Shri Kalyanarayaji seat some Devi for anyone else, and let him maintain the worship. You do not take anything of the Devi’s worship. Whatever bhog is offered to Shri Thakurji, you three take that.”

Then Babavenu said, “Maharaj! You come to my house and stay for two days; as the method of seva is, please show by your grace, for no one in this village knows.” Then establishing Shri Kalyanarayaji, Shri Acharyaji came to Babavenu’s house. There in the lower room of Babavenu’s house the seven hundred rupees appeared. So, taking them appropriately, they were placed before Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji said, “These are not for our use, they are given to you. And so that your firm faith may be in Thakurji, for that they are given; you keep them.” Thereafter Shri Acharyaji remained for four days, had the Panchamrit bath performed for Shri Kalyanarayaji, placed him upon the foreheads of Babavenu and Krishnadas, and told the entire method of seva of the Pushtimarg. And he gave the command, “Whatever Shri Thakurji commands you, do that.” Explaining in this way, he proceeded toward Aadel.

So Babavenu and Krishnadas together began to perform seva. Yadavendradas the khavas was attending to all external tasks. Then Babavenu gave a Brahmin ten to fifteen rupees, seated a Devi there, and entrusted that worship to him. So that Brahmin, being pleased, performed seva; the livelihood of the village was there, so he ate from that. And for Babavenu and Yadavendradas the khavas there remained no relatives; all died. And Krishnadas had two brothers, who came to Aadel and received names from Shri Acharyaji, and became ordinary Vaishnavas.

In this way many days passed. Shri Govardhandhar manifested and sat upon Govardhan; thereafter Shri Gusainji was serving—hearing this, the minds of Babavenu and Krishnadas and Yadavendradas the khavas were pleased, that “We should have darshan of Shri Govardhandhar.” So Babavenu saw with the eyes of the heart like this: he had darshan of the form of Shri Govardhandhar. And Krishnadas’s separation (viraha) remained eight watches of the day and night, that “When will attainment in the lila happen?” So singing kirtan he made his living.

And Yadavendradas the khavas, accepting all matters as the will of Bhagavan, served with joy.

Then one day Shri Kalyanarayaji gave the command to the three persons, “You go for the darshan of Shri Govardhannanathji. Now your attainment will happen there.” Then Babavenu said, “On whose forehead will you now reside?” Then Shri Kalyanarayaji said, “Krishnadas has two brothers; being placed upon their foreheads, you go.” Then Babavenu, calling the two brothers of Krishnadas, said, “Great is your fortune. With focused mind perform seva of Shri Thakurji. This house and possessions are all entrusted to you. We three persons will go to Braj. There the bodies of the three of us will be left; knowing the will of Bhagavan to be such, we proceed.” Then the two began to do seva. Then, being pleased, these three persons departed. In a few days they came to Mathura.

Prasang 1 – So Babavenu sees with the eyes of the heart.

So these three persons went to have darshan of Kesorayaji. So in Mathura they came and had darshan. While having darshan, Krishnadas had darshan of the form of Shri Govardhandhar from the form of Shri Kesorayaji. So for Krishnadas there arose extreme separation for the darshan of the form of Shri Govardhandhar, so this kirtan was sung by Krishnadas.

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(राग बलावल | Raga Bilaval)

आली ! तू देखरी नयनन गरवरधर। सहचरी कह त दु तय सहचरी सो परम मु दत प्यारी राधावर ॥ १॥

“O friend! Do you not see with your eyes Girvardhar. The companion says to the second

companion about the supremely delighted dear Radha’s beloved.” (1)

भूषन भू षत अंग, मोहन-बसन मोहत कनक किान्त ह र। चतें चत हरत वश्व जुव तनके सवस देत कर कमल

क र ॥२॥

“Adorned with ornaments upon the limbs, enchanting garments, a golden luster that

captivates. Stealing minds upon minds, giving everything to the world's maidens, with

lotus-hands." (2)

उपमा कहा देऊ को लायक, वरनों कहा कसोर वैस वरु। सुर त अंत लटकत ब्रज आवत " कृष्णदास" बड़भाग कल्प

तरु ।॥३॥

"To whom shall I give a comparison that is fitting, how shall I describe such

youthfulness? At the end of memory hangs, coming to Braj —'Krishnadas,' greatly

fortunate wish-fulfilling tree." (3)

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While singing this pada, the body of Krishnadas fell in the temple of Shri Kesorayaji. Then Babavenu and Yadavendradas the khavas performed the cremation of Krishnadas's body; Babavenu said to Jadav the khavas, "A monitor lizard (goh) has killed Krishnadas. And we will leave the body after having darshan of Shri Govarddhanathji."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment):—Its intent is this, that the goh is the form of Time (kal). So it took him earlier than us. This is said. In this, Time is of two types, where the chief authority is of Shri Thakurji. Then separation arose for Krishnadas, so through separation his bodily condition was forgotten. He became absorbed in the lila. So, making Babavenu hear, he sang the kirtan, "O friend." Both are sakhis of Vishakhaji in the lila; therefore he says to Babavenu, "You see, with the eyes Girvardhar. Why do you wander here and there? (I) with my eyes am seeing Girvardhar. And the eyes do not go anywhere else. So open the way ahead." The companion says to the second companion—Krishnadas is a companion, and Babavenu is a companion. So Krishnadas says to them, "Supremely delighted is the dear Radha's beloved. To them alone my eyes are attached." In this way, singing the kirtan, he made known to Babavenu the feeling of his heart. So his separation for Shri Govardhandhar could not be borne. That which is Time is the power of Bhagavan, the chief authority. It is endowed with the form of will-power. Therefore it is said in the Shikshapatra, the verse:

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यतः कालस्तद् वभू तः कालः कलयतामहम ्। मुख्या धकाय प हरे रच्छाशिक्तस्वरूपवान ् ॥ १।।

“Because Time is that very power; I am the measurer among those who measure.

Even the chief authority of Hari is endowed with the form of the will-power.” (1)

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So Time, knowing the Lord’s will, at once caused Krishnadas to reach the Lord. Then Babavenu said, “A goh killed Krishnadas.” Its meaning is this: the body in the form of the sense of “I-ness” and attachment, the subtle-body desire, that body the goh killed. It is said that where until the linga-sharira (subtle body) does not fall, there until the attainment of Bhagavan does not occur. So the goh, killing the linga-body, took him—this is said. Thereafter he tells his own matter, that “We, having darshan of Shri Govardhandhar, will leave the linga-body.” In that he showed: “We do not yet have the same separation as Krishnadas now. When we will have darshan of Shri Govardhandhar, then separation will arise; then we will leave the body.” In this way Babavenu showed humility, that “Our work Shri Govardhandhar will do.”

Thereafter Babavenu and Yadavendradas the khavas both went from Mathura and came to the doorway of Shri Nathji. So they had darshan of Shri Nathji. There Babavenu sang kirtans before Shri Nathji. Then from the neck of Shri Nathji a garland of flowers fell. Then Ramdas gave one prasad betel (bida) and the garland to Babavenu.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment):—Its meaning is this, that Shri Nathji gave you separation. And he gave farewell from this body. Now you will attain in the lila. And the garland grew larger from the neck of Shri Nathji. So this—what—the garland is in the form of the devotee. So in the hands of devotees there is separation. When the Braj-devotee gives separation, then he comes. So upon taking the garland, separation arose. And the bida gives auspiciousness. So Ramdasji giving the bida shows that the Lord is pleased with you.

Thereafter, doing dandavat, Babavenu, taking the garland and the bida, descended from the mountain, left the body. Then the cremation of Babavenu’s body was performed by Yadavendradas the khavas. Thereafter, becoming purified, he came for the darshan of Shri Gusainji. Then Shri Gusainji, knowing him to be of Bhagavan, gave

him seva; so Yadavendradas began to do it, but in his mind sorrow remained. Thereafter Yadavendradas the khavas thought, “Now, staying here, what is there to do? Wherever Babavenu is, we should go there. That is better.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment):—Why so? In the lila too Yadavendradas the khavas is the sakhi of Babavenu, therefore he pleased Babavenu by attending. So now, without the company of Babavenu, he cannot remain. So separation arose.

Then Yadavendradas the khavas thought, “The cremation of Krishnadas’s body was performed by me. Now, who will have a Vaishnav sevak perform the cremation of my body? Then an obstacle will occur in their seva; so I should not have it done by them.” Thinking this, he had darshan of Shri Nathji and, thereafter, going into the forest, daily brought bundles of dry wood from the dry land. Doing so, he saw that now the wood had become suitable for the cremation of the body. Then he had darshan of Shri Nathji. Thereafter in the morning, remembering Bhagavan with the sevaks, doing dandavat to Shri Gusainji, then taking fire he came into the forest, and on the side where the wind was, he placed fire in the pyre; then doing dandavat to the flag of Shri Nathji, he sat upon that pyre, then remembering the lotus-feet of Shri Acharyaji Shri Gusainji, leaving the body, he attained the lila. Burning in the fire, he himself, with his own hands, performed the rites for his body.

And earlier Babavenu had said to Yadavendradas, “Do not delay, you come quickly.” But he delayed these many days because Shri Gusainji had entrusted him with the seva of Shri Nathji. So Yadavdas is such a one belonging to Bhagavan that Time is under his control. Thereafter a certain Vaishnav asked Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! Yadavdas has not been seen for two or three days.” Then Shri Gusainji said, “Yadavdas has left the body and attained the Lord.” Then the Vaishnavs said, “Where was the cremation of the body done?” Then Shri Gusainji said, “In the forest, having gathered wood, he himself arranged the means of his own cremation. What should I do?”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): So from this (we learn) how could there be an obstacle to the Bhagavan-seva of any Vaishnav? So Babavenu, Krishnadas,

Yadavendradas the khavas are supramundane divine souls. Their power is supramundane; such recipients of grace are of Bhagavan. How far can their account be told?

Varta 40 - Jagatanand

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Jagatanand, a Saraswat Brahmin, who lived in Thaneshwar, his story's meaning is being spoken.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Jagatanand is the sakhi of Bhama Sakhi Shri Swaminiji. In the divine play, his name is "Madhuri." He was born in the house of a Brahmin in Thaneshwar. When he was twelve years old, he went to Kashi to study knowledge. He lived in Kashi for twelve years and studied the Shri Bhagavat. Afterward, he returned to Thaneshwar and would speak the discourse of Shri Bhagavat on the banks of the Saraswati River. From this, his livelihood needs were managed.

Prasang 1 – Initiation of Jagatanand into the Path of Grace

Once, Shri Acharyaji came to Thaneshwar. In the morning, after completing his Sandhya, Jagatanand came, bathed in the Saraswati, and began to narrate the discourse of Shri Bhagavat. Then Shri Acharyaji thought in his mind, "This Jagatanand is a divine soul belonging to me. I must accept him." With this thought, Shri Acharyaji came and sat in front of Jagatanand.

Jagatanand thought that some pandit Brahmin had come. Then Jagatanand recited a verse from the Shri Bhagavat, the Venu Geet: 'Prayo batamba vihaga…' After reciting this verse and explaining its meaning, Jagatanand asked Shri Acharyaji, "Is this the correct meaning, or is there something more?"

Shri Acharyaji said, "This verse has many sentiments and many meanings. If you can, tell them." Then Jagatanand said, "Maharaj! The meaning that I knew, I have spoken. Now you please speak further." Shri Acharyaji said, "You are seated on the Vyasa Asan, how can I cross over it?"

Then Jagatanand got down from the seat and said, "Please sit and explain. I wish to listen." Then Shri Acharyaji began to explain the meaning of that verse according to Subodhiniji. While speaking, the time passed until the third quarter of the day. Then Shri Acharyaji

said, “The explanation of this one verse will take two or three months. Therefore, now you must be hungry, so rise.”

Then Jagatanand realized, “This is the Supreme Lord Himself.” Then Jagatanand offered obeisance and humbly prayed, “Maharaj! You are indeed the Supreme Purushottam. Please explain as long as you wish. Now please be merciful and come to my house.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “I do not go to anyone’s house except that of my sevak.” Then Jagatanand humbly prayed, “Maharaj! Please make me your sevak.” Then Shri Acharyaji ordered, “Go, bathe and come.” Then Jagatanand bathed in the Saraswati and came with pure touch. Then Shri Acharyaji recited the name and gave him Brahmasambandh. Afterward, he went to Jagatanand’s house.

Then Shri Acharyaji said to Jagatanand, “You must perform the service of Shri Bhagavan.” Then Jagatanand said, “Maharaj! I have one Thakur Lalji, who always sits in the Tulsi plant. Daily I pour one small lota of water over him.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Quickly, bring Shri Thakurji here. Do not do such service in that way.” Then Jagatanand brought Shri Thakurji. Shri Acharyaji bathed Him with Panchamrit, seated Him on a throne, and placed Him on Jagatanand’s head. Shri Acharyaji himself prepared the food items in Jagatanand’s house and offered bhog to Shri Thakurji. Afterward, he himself ate and gave the plate of remnants to Jagatanand. Then at night, Shri Acharyaji recited this verse:

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पठनीयं प्रयत्नेन सवहेतु ववजितम ्।

That which is to be studied must be done with effort, giving up all other motives.

वृत्यथ नैव युञ्जीत प्राणः कंठगतर प ॥।

It should never be used for the sake of livelihood, even if the life-breath has reached the

throat

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On hearing this, Jagatanand immediately resolved with water, “From today onwards, I will never narrate the Shri Bhagavat for livelihood, I will narrate other scriptures.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Never narrate the Shri Bhagavat for livelihood. If your life departs, then

depart happily.” In this way, staying at Jagatanand’s house, Shri Acharyaji taught him the method of seva in the Pushtimarg. After that, he set forth for the circumambulation of the Earth.

Then Jagatanand began to serve Bhagavan with a devoted mind. And for livelihood, he narrated the Puranas and the Mahabharata. By performing Bhagavad seva in this way, after some days, Shri Thakurji began to reveal His loving sentiments to him. Thus, Jagatanand became a great devotee of Bhagavan. Here ends the narration of his story.

Varta 41 - Ananddas and Vishvambhardas

Now, the sevaks of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Ananddas and Vishvambhardas, Kshatriyas, living in Prayag, their story is being told here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, both are companions of the young maidens. In the leela, Ananddas is called "Nagari" and Vishvambhardas is called "Mallika." They were born in the house of a Kshatriya in Prayag. From childhood their minds remained in a state of detachment. Food, clothing, and the pleasures of the body did not attract them. They ate and wore only what their parents gave. Even if given good, costly clothes, they would soil them with the mud of Triveni in Prayag before wearing them. Parents scolded and even beat them, but they did not speak. If any ornaments were given, they would give them to some Brahmin or a renunciate. They never spoke much to their parents. At times they only said: “What is the use of only eating and dressing? If you do some work for higher purpose, that is good.” These words were not pleasing to the parents.

Later, the parents arranged the marriage of Ananddas. Then Ananddas said: “Do not get me married. I will become a renunciate.” But the parents did not agree and prepared for the wedding. The day of the marriage was fixed. Then Ananddas said to his younger brother Vishvambhardas: “Our parents do not listen. First they will marry me, then marry you. Then we will be trapped. So, what is the way now?”

The younger brother Vishvambhardas said: “Let us leave this village and go elsewhere. Then we will be saved.” So both brothers, in the evening, sat on a boat, crossed the river Yamuna, and went to Chitrakoot. There they saw the beauty of the mountains, ate fruits

from the forest, and stayed for eight days. Meanwhile, the parents searched all over the village. Later, the father heard from someone that both sons had gone to Chitrakoot. Then the father himself went to Chitrakoot. He saw the condition of both sons and said: “Now you return home. We will not marry you. We are old; when our bodies are gone, then you may do as your mind wishes. Now, in your young age, exile is not proper.”

Then both brothers said: “Exile is better in childhood only. But since you have come, we will go with you. But do not talk of our marriage. Do not follow us. Do what you like. If we do any wrong or unrighteous act, then stop us. But we are fond of the company of renunciates; we will sit with them. That will not please you. That is why we left home.”

Then the father said: “Now come home. Do as you wish. We will not stop you.” Then both brothers returned with their father. After that, they came home, ate food, and then left again. Later they would listen to spiritual talks and scriptures wherever they could. They lived lying on the ground. They never cared about bodily comfort or discomfort.

One time both brothers were sitting on the bank of Shri Yamunaji, talking about knowledge: “Brother! Our whole life has passed. We have not recognized the Lord. Our mind has not become absorbed in Shri Thakurji. We have heard many spiritual talks, but the mind has not become steady. Thus our human life has gone to waste. Now again we will suffer 84 lakh births. What can we do? No solution is visible.” Talking in this way, they lost courage and beat their chests, crying on the bank of Shri Yamunaji. They lost awareness of their bodies and lay there the whole night.

At midnight, Shri Thakurji said to Shri Acharyaji: “Both Kshatriya boys are lying on the sandbank of Shri Yamunaji. They are suffering for My sake. You should go and accept them, otherwise in a few days they will give up their bodies.” Then Shri Acharyaji woke up Krishnadas, Meghan, and other Vaishnavs and at once went to the bank of Shri Yamunaji. There was no one there at the ghat, only a tied boat. Shri Acharyaji, along with Vaishnavs, sat in the boat. He said to them: “You do not know how to row, but row as you can. The boat will cross, that is My wish.” Then the Vaishnavs rowed. The boat reached the place where both brothers were lying on the sand. Shri Acharyaji took water of Yamuna in His hand, recited Vedic mantras, and sprinkled it over the brothers. Both got up, bowed to Shri Acharyaji, and prayed: “Maharaj! Please accept us.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said: “In the morning you will be given initiation.” The brothers replied: “Maharaj! By morning this body may remain or not. What proof is there of this body? Today we have not eaten anything; do not delay. By the grace of Shri Thakurji we have Your darshan. Who knows how our mind will be by morning?” Then Shri Acharyaji said: “Your mind will never be spoiled. You are noble souls. Even if you had eaten food, you are still pure.” Then He gave them names and performed Brahmasambandh initiation. He brought them home in the boat.

In the morning, Shri Acharyaji bathed and after serving Shri Thakurji, told the brothers: “You should serve the Lord.” The brothers replied: “Maharaj, our mind is inclined to take sannyas. But we cannot think of any other place. If our mind becomes steady, if the state of renunciation leaves us, if we remain at home, then we can serve the Lord.” Then Shri Acharyaji gave them charanamrit and read to them the book “Sannyas Nirnaya.” Then divine bliss rose in them, and the nectar of devotion became steady in their hearts. Their mental agitation vanished. Shri Acharyaji gave them clothes as prasadi from Shri Navneetpriyaji and said: “Seat this deity and serve Him. At home, your mind will always remain in the leela of Shri Thakurji. Neither worldly life nor Vedic rules will obstruct you.”

Then the brothers bowed to Shri Acharyaji and returned home. Their parents cried, saying: “Sons, for two days you did not come. Where did you eat?” They replied: “If you give us one place, we will remain at home.” The parents said: “The whole house is yours; live wherever you like.” The brothers said: “No, give us a separate place. We will not live in your space. If we stay, you should not come there. Then we will remain at home.” The parents showed them a separate place.

Then both brothers cooked food together, offered it to Shri Thakurji, took mahaprasad, and did spiritual talks. They were absorbed in divine bliss. Reflecting also on the mood of “Sannyas Nirnaya,” they remained day and night absorbed in the nectar of devotion. The parents were happy that their sons were at home, thinking, “What if we do not see them?”

Prasang 1 – The Brothers’ Bhagavad Discussions

Both brothers engaged in spiritual discussions. At times, the younger brother would fall asleep while the elder brother, absorbed in divine bliss, continued to speak. Then Shri Thakurji Himself would give the response, “hmm.” When the younger brother awoke, both would say: “I heard till here; afterwards I fell asleep.” Then the elder brother

would say: “When you were asleep, who responded with the sound ‘hmm’?” The younger replied: “I had fallen asleep, I do not know.” Then the elder said: “It must have been Shri Thakurji who responded.”

Both brothers rejoiced that through Shri Acharyaji’s grace, Shri Thakurji Himself revealed His presence. From childhood, they knew nothing of worldly or Vedic life. They never engaged in worldly suffering even slightly. Such were these blessed devotees, Ananddas and Vishvambhardas, recipients of Shri Acharyaji’s grace. Their story is told up to here.

Varta 42 - One Brahmani of Adel

Now, of the sevaks of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, there was a Brahmani who lived in Adel. The sentiment of her story is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): That Brahmani is, in the divine play, the friend of Lalitaji. Her name is "Shashikala." She appeared in the house of a Brahman in Adel. When she was nine years old, she was married into the house of a Brahman in Adel. Her husband remained ill. When this Brahmani was forty-five years of age, death by disease took him away. Thus, this Brahmani never experienced worldly pleasures or the joys of home. Afterwards, she became alone, and then, by the will of God, a thought arose in her mind: “Now I shall become the sevak of Shri Acharyaji.”

So she went, bowed down to Shri Acharyaji, and prayed, “Maharaj! Please accept me under your shelter. My whole life has been spent in the service of my worldly husband, who has now died. Now I have come to your shelter.” Saying this, she began to weep.

Then compassion arose in Shri Acharyaji. He said, “Go, bathe in Shri Yamunaji and return.” Then that Brahmani bathed in Shri Yamunaji and returned. Then Shri Acharyaji seated her before Shri Navneetpriyaji, had her offer her name, and said, “Now you perform the service of God, through which you shall be fulfilled.” Then the Brahmani said, “Please bestow service upon me.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Tomorrow I will give you service. Today remain here.” Afterwards, he placed before her the leaf plate of remnants. She accepted that prasad and stayed there. She stayed the night, and the next morning came. Then that Brahmani completed her bodily duties, bathed in Shri Yamunaji, and returned.

Meanwhile, a Brahman from the south arrived. He gave Shri Acharyaji a book of Shri Bhagavat and a form of Shri Lalji, saying, “I am going to Kashi to accept renunciation. Please keep these.”

Prasang 1 – The Brahmani Receives Shri Balakrishnaji’s

Service

Then Shri Acharyaji had that form of Shri Lalji bathed with Panchamrit, placed the service upon that Brahmani's head, and gave the name Shri Balakrishnaji. Then that Brahmani bowed down to Shri Acharyaji and took leave, carrying Shri Balakrishnaji and beginning to lovingly perform service. Shri Thakurji began to reveal His affection.

That Brahmani was very simple, innocent, and without possessions. She had no wealth. She placed earthen pots filled with water before Shri Thakurji. In her kitchen too there were only earthen vessels. Her house was very small. In that very house were the kitchen, the temple, and the materials for Shri Thakurji. She did not understand much about religious practices and rituals, and her eyesight was weak. Yet she performed service with love.

Because of this, Shri Acharyaji and Shri Thakurji remained pleased. Whatever came from yajmans' homes, she managed her livelihood with it. Then the Vaishnavs began to discuss among themselves: "Why did Shri Acharyaji bestow the service of God upon this Brahmani? She does not understand religious rules, she has no wealth. If service were bestowed upon us, we would perform it properly." In this way they discussed among themselves, but could not say anything directly to Shri Acharyaji.

Later, one day, a Vaishnav prayed to Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! That Brahmani is very limited in wealth, does not understand religious practices, and her eyesight is very weak. If you were to bestow Shri Thakurji upon another Vaishnav, then the service would be done properly."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Through rituals, practices, or wealth, Shri Thakurji is not pleased. Shri Thakurji desires love. That Brahmani has supreme love. Just as that Brahmani performs, so does Shri Thakurji accept it." Then that Vaishnav remained silent.

Later, Shri Acharyaji, after performing evening worship at Shri Yamunaji, was returning. On the way, He came near the house of that Brahmani. Then a Vaishnav said, "Maharaj! This is the Brahmani's house. Please go and see the manner of her service. Give her your darshan."

Then Shri Acharyaji went to that Brahmani's house. At that time, she was making rotis. She did not know that Shri Acharyaji had arrived. As she placed one roti aside, silently, Shri Thakurji Himself lifted it and ate it. But it was not visible to that Brahmani's eyes. Then, as she reached out for the roti, she could not find it. Then she said aloud, "A

mouse or a cat must have taken away the roti." Striking her hand upon the floor, she again began making another roti.

Then Shri Acharyaji said to that Brahmani, "Your rotis are being eaten by Shri Thakurji. It is not a mouse or cat. You are very fortunate." Then that Brahmani said, "Maharaj! You have come? I did not see you, so I did not know. Please forgive my fault. And I have no wealth. Only through your words does Shri Thakurji eat."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Just as you are doing, so does Shri Thakurji accept with joy. Always do in this way." In this manner, being pleased with that Brahmani, Shri Acharyaji returned to His home.

Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji said to all the Vaishnavs, "Shri Thakurji hungers for love. He is pleased with that Brahmani. All should know that great grace has been bestowed upon her."

So Shri Thakurji, in this way, daily lifted the rotis with His own hand. Then that Brahmani would say, "I made all the rotis, but I do not know—maybe the mouse or cat has taken them." Then Shri Thakurji, after eating, gave all the rotis to that Brahmani. Thus Shri Thakurji always cared for her. But that Brahmani, having a very simple nature, always said the same thing. And Shri Thakurji, overcome with love, would eat directly without the offering being formally placed, and then give it back. Thus that Brahmani became the recipient of Shri Acharyaji's great grace.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this story, the principle is shown that pure and guileless devotion is very dear to Shri Thakurji. He is not pleased by cleverness. He is bound only by love.

Varta 43 - One Kshatrani of Prayag

Now, among the sevaks of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, there was a Kshatrani who lived in Prayag. The sentiment of her story is told—

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Gokulnathji did not use names that were given carelessly. Sometimes parents would give their children thoughtless names like Faqira or Ghaseeta. Shri Gokulnathji never spoke such unworthy names. That is why the names of some Vaishnavs are not mentioned. This Kshatrani is, in the divine play, a friend of Shri Swaminiji. Her name is 'Neela.' She appeared in the house of a Kshatriya in Prayag. That Kshatriya was very wealthy. He did not count anyone else as equal. He gave his daughter into marriage in the house of another Kshatriya in Prayag. That was a poor household, so she was given there.

One day, the father-in-law called his son-in-law. The son-in-law delayed for two hours. The father-in-law and mother-in-law became angry and said, "Take her back." They told their daughter, "You go back with him." Then the daughter said, "When the son-in-law comes, then I will go." The father said, "If he will not come, should we sit here forever? If you will go, then go; otherwise, we will give you to another." Then the daughter said, "Without my husband, I will not go." Then the parents became angry and threw everything away.

Later, when the son-in-law came, the father-in-law and mother-in-law spoke nothing to him. Then the wife said to her husband, "Now it is not right to even drink water in their house." She told her husband everything. Then the husband said, "Never again in this lifetime should you even mention your parents' house, and then I will take you to our home." Then she said, "Take me home. In this lifetime I will never again speak the name of my parents' house." Then the two of them went to their home, cooked food, and ate.

Later, in the mind of the father-in-law arose the thought that "if the daughter becomes a widow, then there will be peace. But it is better to kill the son-in-law." So he gave some wealth to certain men and kept them prepared. Then one day, the parents, son, and daughter-in-law went early in the morning for bathing at Makar. Those men killed all three, leaving only that Kshatriya's daughter. Afterwards, the ruler came to know of this matter, and the house of the in-laws was looted. Later, a fire arose in their house, and in that, the Kshatrani's parents

and family all perished. She remained alone. She made her living by spinning yarn on the wheel.

One day, she went for bathing in Shri Yamunaji. It was during the month of Kartik. She went two hours before the last part of the night. She bathed and put on clothes. After wearing the clothes, she filled a pot with water. In that pot appeared a form of Shri Thakur Lalji. But she did not know of it. Returning home, she offered the pot of water to Tulsi. Then Shri Thakurji went and sat by Tulsi. Seeing this, she became astonished. She thought, “This form! What is His wish?” Thinking this, she sat near Tulsi. She forgot all bodily awareness.

She was filled with concern: “Now whom should I ask? There is no one at home.” She forgot even about cooking. Sometimes she would lift Shri Thakurji in her hand, sometimes place Him back by Tulsi. Thinking in this way, half the night passed. Then Shri Thakurji said, “Why are you thinking so much? In the morning, place me before Shri Acharyaji, become a sevak, and serve me. I have come into your pot from Shri Yamunaji only to bestow grace upon you.” Then she became joyful, remained hungry the whole night, sitting by Tulsi.

Later, morning came. Then, carrying Shri Thakurji, she went to Shri Acharyaji in Adel, bowed down, told the whole story, and prayed, “Make me a sevak.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “You are very fortunate. Among your family, you are the divine one. That is why Shri Thakurji has bestowed grace upon you, that without you even performing service, He Himself has spoken to you.” Then that Kshatrani was told to recite the name and make her offering. Then Shri Thakurji was given Panchamrit bath, seated upon a seat, and bestowed upon that Kshatrani.

Shri Acharyaji said, “Now go home and serve with full devotion. His name is Shri Balakrishnaji. Keep affection for Him as for a child.” Then that Kshatrani bowed down to Shri Acharyaji, received Shri Thakurji, and returned to her home in Prayag. She began to perform service.

Prasang 1 – The Lesson of Daily Fresh Offering

So, spinning yarn, she sold thread. From that, she set aside two coins. Doing this, when some money gathered, she kept materials for Balbhog for ten to twelve days. Then, bringing ghee and sugar, sieving flour, she made laddus. Then she filled a pot with them, tied its mouth, and placed it upon the hanging shelf in the temple. In her mind she thought, “Now for ten to twelve days, Balbhog is assured.”

So, relieved of worry, she went, performed her duties, accepted Mahaprasad, and then sat to spin yarn.

Then, from the word of Shri Acharyaji, Shri Thakurji arose from His throne, took down the pot of laddus from the shelf, brought it back to the throne, and began eating the laddus. Then sounds arose from the pot in the temple. The Kshatrani thought in her mind, “The sound of the pot in the temple—perhaps a mouse or cat has gotten into the pot of offerings?” Thinking this, she quickly opened the temple door and went inside. She saw Shri Thakurji sitting on the throne with the pot, eating the laddus from it. Seeing this, the Kshatrani began beating her chest, saying, “This offering I had prepared for you for ten to twelve days, but today you have eaten it all at once?”

Then Shri Thakurji said, “You have collected and stored food, and you sit relieved of worry for ten to twelve days. But I like that which is fresh and new daily. What use is stale food?” Then that Kshatrani bowed down and prayed, “Maharaj! I was mistaken to do so. Now I will prepare fresh food daily. I will not be lazy.” From then on, that Kshatrani began to prepare and offer new food daily.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): And Shri Thakurji ate all the stored food to show that offerings must always be prepared fresh daily. If one remains assured and without care, then the mind will not be restrained. The mind will wander here and there, and so He ate it all. And He showed the Vaishnav that stale food has no value. Fresh and new food every day is most dear. And that Kshatrani beat her chest because this is the discipline of Pushtimarg—that Vaishnavs offer, and Shri Thakurji eats. Here, Shri Thakurji broke the discipline and ate the food Himself with His own hand, but in truth He did not leave the devotee. If He were to leave the discipline, then He would leave the devotee, and that would be harmful.

And the sentiment here is this: that if Shri Thakurji Himself takes and eats, then the service is not complete. If, by His order, I myself place it with my own hands, then my hands are fulfilled and my service is complete. That is why she beat her chest—that the food was prepared for Shri Thakurji, and Shri Thakurji ate it, so He was pleased. But my service went in vain for the sake of service itself. That is why she struck her chest.

And in this story, it is shown that food must be prepared with the thought of offering it to Shri Thakurji. Then Shri Thakurji will lovingly eat. If one prepares food with other desires—such as to satisfy people, or because “we like this food,” and so on—then He may

outwardly accept but will not eat joyfully. Therefore, food should be prepared with the sentiment of Shri Thakurji alone.

Thus, that Kshatrani became the recipient of Shri Acharyaji's grace and was truly God's own. Her story is to be told up to this point.

Varta 44 - Gorja & Samarai

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevaks, the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, lived in Singhanand. The mother-in-law's name was Gorja, and the daughter-in-law's name was Samarai, both Kshatriyanis. Their story is spoken of here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): These two, in the divine play (Leela), are the sakhis (companions) of Shri Swaminiji's sakhi Chandrabhaga. In Leela, the mother-in-law Gorja is the sakhi named "Nanda." The daughter-in-law Samarai is the sakhi named "Vrinda." They lived in Singhanand. How Shri Acharyaji made them his sevaks is already mentioned above in the story of Vasudev Chhakda.

Prasang 1 – The Offering to Shri Thakurji

They used to serve Shri Thakurji. Once, Shri Acharyaji arrived in Thaneshwar. Between Thaneshwar and Singhanand flowed the Saraswati river. Shri Acharyaji would never cross over Saraswati.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Because Saraswati is the wife of Brahma. How can one cross over a woman? That is why he would never go to Singhanand.

So, the Vaishnavs of Singhanand would come to Thaneshwar to take darshan of Shri Acharyaji. When Shri Acharyaji reached Thaneshwar, the news was sent to Singhanand that Shri Acharyaji had come. Then the mother-in-law told the daughter-in-law, "I am going to Thaneshwar to take darshan of Shri Acharyaji. You first wake Shri Thakurji, perform Mangala, then do Shringar. Afterwards, prepare Rajbhog and offer it to Shri Thakurji. I will return after darshan, then you can go."

The daughter-in-law became very happy and said, "Today I will do Shri Thakurji's Shringar and offer Bhog." The mother-in-law replied, "You first have darshan, then I will go."

So the mother-in-law went to Thaneshwar for Shri Acharyaji's darshan. Meanwhile, the daughter-in-law quickly bathed, performed Mangala for Shri Thakurji, then did the Shringar. Afterwards, she prepared the entire meal, arranged the thalis and bowls, and placed the Bhog before Shri Thakurji. She then sat aside. She washed the

vessels and cleaned the kitchen, and by then some time had passed.

When she went to see if the Bhog was accepted, she found all the thalis and bowls still filled with food just as before. She prayed to Shri Thakurji, “Maharaj! My mother-in-law has gone to Thaneshwar for Shri Acharyaji’s darshan. I do not know anything. She instructed me, and I did exactly as told. Yet you did not accept the Bhog. What should I do now?”

Then she thought perhaps she had made some mistake, or the kitchen had become impure. So she washed all the utensils again, purified the kitchen, bathed carefully, and cooked afresh. She again arranged the thalis and offered the Bhog to Shri Thakurji. She stepped out and cleaned the kitchen utensils, only to find again that the food remained untouched. Distressed, she cried, “Maharaj, I do not know anything. Why are you not accepting?” She began to weep and thought, “I must have committed some grave offense, that is why Shri Thakurji has not accepted.”

She tried a third time, with utmost care. She cooked again, placed the food before Shri Thakurji, and sat aside. Once more, she found the food untouched. Seeing this, she was deeply sorrowful. After offering three times, Shri Thakurji had not accepted. She became both distressed and exhausted, fainted, and fell to the ground. Her throat had gone dry due to fatigue.

At that time, Shri Thakurji rose from His throne and gave her water to drink from His own pot. She regained consciousness and opened her eyes. Shri Thakurji could not bear her suffering.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): She was pure and without deceit, knowing nothing of trickery. Therefore, Shri Thakurji was pleased and said to her, “Why are you distressed? You cooked three times, and I accepted all three times. Why do you doubt?”

The daughter-in-law replied, “How can I believe that? I saw all the food still there as it was.” Shri Thakurji said, “Whatever I touch never decreases. If you still do not believe, tomorrow morning I will eat before your eyes. Now, take Mahaprasad. I ate three times, but you took nothing, that is why you feel weak.”

Then the daughter-in-law distributed some prasada to the cows but did not take any herself. Shri Thakurji Himself had given her water to drink, so she sustained herself only on that.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): She thought, “Shri Thakurji

always speaks truth. Would He console me without cause? Tomorrow, when I see Him eating before my eyes, I will take Mahaprasad."

That night she prepared everything in advance and went to sleep. In the morning, after bathing and doing her duties, she performed Mangala and Shringar, then quickly cooked the food, arranged the thalis, and offered them to Shri Thakurji. As she prepared to step aside, Shri Thakurji said, "Why are you stepping aside today? You would not believe earlier. That is why today I will eat in front of you."

So she sat nearby, and Shri Thakurji ate all the food well before her eyes. Then He joked and laughed with her, letting her taste all the rasas. Afterwards, Shri Damodarji told Shri Acharyaji everything, saying, "Samarai gives me great joy." Shri Acharyaji kept this in his mind, thinking, "When Samarai comes for darshan, I will ask her."

Later, Shri Thakurji ate in the exact way Samarai had described, leaving the food appearing untouched. Then the daughter-in-law believed that Shri Damodarji had indeed eaten all three times before. She accepted Mahaprasad without doubt. In this way, for five days she offered Bhog directly before Shri Thakurji, and He ate in her presence.

Afterwards, the mother-in-law went to take leave from Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji said, "Quickly send the daughter-in-law for darshan." So the mother-in-law returned and told her, "Now you go for Shri Acharyaji's darshan."

The daughter-in-law came, bowed down, and at that time Shri Acharyaji was cooking. He said to her, "Come here, roll the rotis." Samarai bathed, came, and began rolling the rotis. Shri Acharyaji then said, "Whatever you told Shri Thakurji, Shri Damodarji has told me everything. Shri Thakurji gave you the experience of all rasas. You are greatly fortunate."

Samarai humbly replied, "If even such matters are held within Shri Thakurji's stomach, then what can I say? After all, He is still a child." Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji was greatly pleased and said, "It would be proper to go to such a Vaishnav's home to give darshan, but how can I? I cannot cross Saraswati."

For two more days Samarai stayed and shared everything with Shri Acharyaji about her experiences with Shri Thakurji. On the third day she asked permission to leave. Shri Acharyaji said, "Why give permission to such a Vaishnav? One should always listen to her stories. But since Shri Thakurji is pleased with you and cannot remain

without you, I give you leave."

Then Samarai bowed and said, "Maharaj! All this is only by your grace. Otherwise, where is Shri Thakurji and where are we worldly beings? Only by your mercy has Shri Thakurji showered grace upon us." Saying this, she left.

Hearing the humility of the daughter-in-law, Shri Acharyaji was very pleased and said, "Such Vaishnavs are rare. Those with whom Shri Thakurji Himself speaks, they alone have such humility." When she returned home, she told her mother-in-law everything that Shri Acharyaji had said and that such great grace had fallen upon her.

Afterwards, one day the daughter-in-law lay down, tired, and fell asleep. At that time, the mother-in-law offered Bhog and was washing vessels. The daughter-in-law woke suddenly and thought, "How could Shri Thakurji have eaten?" She quickly bathed and went to the temple, offered Bhog to Shri Thakurji before her own eyes, and then Shri Thakurji told the mother-in-law, "From now on, you do the kitchen work, but Shringar and Bhog will be done by the daughter-in-law. I eat well from her hands."

So the mother-in-law said to the daughter-in-law, "Shri Thakurji is very pleased with you. From now on, you do the Shringar and place all the Bhog. I will cook and do the outside work." From then on, the daughter-in-law daily did new and beautiful Shringar, prepared the offerings, and offered Bhog directly to Shri Damodarji. Shri Thakurji was always pleased. Thus, the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law were recipients of Shri Acharyaji's grace. Their story is told up to this point.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This story shows that pure, guileless love is what pleases Shri Thakurji the most.

Varta 45 - Krishnadasi

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's female sevak, Krishnadasi, who served as the attendant of Shri Rukminiji. Their story is presented here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Krishnadasi is the intimate sakhi of Shri Swaminiji. "Brajmangala" is her name in Leela. There was a village two kos from Patna. There she was born in the house of a Gaud Brahmin. When she was five years old, one day she went with her mother for a bath in the Ganga. There, a boat was coming after crossing over. The boat was loaded with wood, and there were boatmen. It was the rainy season. The boat split, and the boatmen swam across and reached the shore. All the wood was carried away by the current. The girl stood on the bank. A crore (a large heap) of wood broke and fell into the Ganga. The girl and the girl's mother both fell. The mother's body slipped away. And the child's hand somehow held on to a piece of wood. That wood drifted for five kos. There, Shri Acharyaji was performing Sandhya-vandan. Then the little girl cried. Shri Acharyaji said, "Who is this child? It appears she has drifted here. Take her to her village. Patna is five kos from here." Then Krishnadas took the girl by the arm and brought her to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji, knowing her to be a divine soul, gave her a name and had an offering made. Then he said, "If any Vaishnav has Mahaprasad, feed it to her." So Krishnadas fed her prasada.

Afterwards Shri Acharyaji said, "I must proceed to have darshan of our Purushottampuri Shri Jagannath Rayji. Therefore, arrange for some man to take her and have her delivered to Patna." Then Krishnadas arranged a man and brought him. He gave him one rupee, and that man took the girl in his lap. Then Shri Acharyaji told Krishnadas, "After settling this girl in Patna, return here. Until then, we are sitting here." So Krishnadas went along and came to Patna. There he met Harivansh Pathak, who lived in Kashi and had come to Patna for business. Krishnadas said to Harivansh Pathak, "Please find a place for this girl. Shri Acharyaji is waiting for me, so I must go." Then Harivansh Pathak brought Mahaprasad for the girl. Krishnadas returned to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji proceeded to Purushottampuri. Later, in seven days, Harivansh Pathak searched throughout the town for a place for the girl. Someone then informed him, "She is the daughter of a Brahmin from such-and-such

village, a Gaud Brahmin." The girl's home was contacted, and her father came. He said, "Daughter, you fell; your mother died. How did you survive?"

Then dedication arose in the girl's name, and, being a divine soul, her understanding became pure. She said, "As far as you are concerned, my mother died and I died too. Why? Because I have become a sevakni of Shri Acharyaji. I will not drink water from any hands other than a Vaishnav's." Then her father said to Harivansh Pathak, "You are a Vaishnav. Just as she is our daughter, so she is your daughter. Keep her in your home. After two or four years, get her married. She says she will not drink water from our hands. And we do not have money. So where will we arrange for her marriage?" Harivansh Pathak said, "Very well, Bhagavan will. How can one turn away the sevak of Shri Acharyaji? But my house is in Kashi; there she will live among the women." Then her father said, "Good." Saying this, the girl's father went home. Afterwards, Harivansh Pathak came to Kashi and brought the girl along.

Later, when she was about ten years old, they searched for an engagement. No Brahmin agreed, saying, "Why should we marry her? We do not know her caste, her food habits, or her place. And this girl publicly declares that she will eat and drink only from the hands of those who are sevaks of Shri Acharyaji. Who will marry her?" Then Harivansh Pathak asked the girl, "We cannot maintain you in our house any longer. After two years you will be of youthful age, and people will slander us for keeping an unmarried girl at home. So what should be done with you now?" Then the girl said, "Send me to Adel, to Shri Acharyaji's house. I will stay there."

Then Harivansh Pathak took the girl along to Adel, offered dandavat to Shri Gusainji, and told him everything about the girl. Shri Gusainji said, "Krishna is ours; she will stay with Bahuji." Then Krishna bowed to Shri Gusainji and made a request, "Maharaj! I am your dasi. Shri Acharyaji has held my hand. Without your lotus feet, I have no refuge anywhere." Seeing Krishna's humility, Shri Gusainji became very pleased and said, "Our manifestation is for Vaishnavs like you. Therefore, this house is yours; live here happily."

Then Krishna stayed in attendance upon Shri Rukmini Bahuji. Harivansh Pathak, taking leave of Shri Gusainji, returned to Kashi. Krishna did all the house work and service. The whole family, out of love, came under her influence. Whatever Krishna said was done. Shri Gusainji, knowing Krishna to be a sevak favored by Shri Acharyaji, kept her with great regard.

Prasang 1 – The Birth and Name of Shri Gokulnathji

Krishna served as the attendant of Rukmini Bahuji. Once, Rukmini Bahuji conceived. Then Krishna said, “This time Bahuji will have a son. I will name him Shri Gokulnathji.” When the days of pregnancy were complete, pain arose in Rukmini Bahuji’s belly. Then Krishna went to a pandit astrologer and asked, “What is the state of the muhurta now?” The astrologer said, “For the next two or four days, it is not auspicious.” Then Krishnadasi came and, placing her hand on Rukmini Bahuji’s belly, said, “Maharaj! Do not come now. Two or four days are not good.” Immediately, the pain subsided. After five to seven days had passed, Krishnadasi again went to that pandit astrologer and asked, “How is the muhurta now?” The astrologer said, “Today is a very beautiful day. The good muhurta is today.” Then Krishna came, placed her hand on Rukmini Bahuji’s belly, and said, “Maharaj! Today is a very beautiful muhurta. The good muhurta is today. Now please come.” Immediately, the child was born.

Afterwards, Shri Gusainji performed the naming ceremony and gave the name Vallabh. But Krishna had already given the name Shri Gokulnathji. Therefore, in the world, the name Shri Gokulnathji became famous. In the house he was called Shri Vallabh. And in the birth chart the name Shri Krishna is written. Shri Gusainji kept this concealed. Krishna was kept with great regard. And when Shri Ghanshyamji was born, then at the naming, Shri Vallabhji said, “Give him the name Shri Gokulnathji.” Shri Gusainji said, “That name is yours only. In the house, he is called Vallabh. And in the whole world, your name is Shri Gokulnathji. Krishna, a devotee of Bhagavan, has given your name; it cannot be changed.”

Prasang 2 – The Song of the Sharad Night

Once, the autumn season (Sharad) arrived. Then Rukmini Bahuji said to Krishna, “Describe for me the Sharad night.” Then Krishna sang the “Sharad Night.” Shri Gusainji became very pleased and said, “It is as if you stood in the Rasa and sang.” Krishna has the experience of the Leela of Nandalaya and the Rasa and other Leelas. She has composed many kirtans. She remained absorbed in Bhagavad rasa for eight prahar. Krishna dasi is such a devotee favored by Shri Acharyaji, devoted to Bhagavan. Up to this point, how far can one narrate her story?

Varta 46 - Bula Mishra

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Bula Mishra, lived in the West. He was a Saraswat Brahmin. Here is the narration of his story.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, he is the companion of Shri Swaminiji's friend, Visakhaji. In the lila his name is "Sumandira." He appeared in the house of a Saraswat Brahmin in Lahore, in the western direction.

When he was ten years old, his father told him, "If you study the scriptures, it will be good. Otherwise, you will remain ignorant like me." Then Bula Mishra said, "Find me a proper pandit and tell me. Then I will study." So, in Lahore, he was seated with a pandit to study. That pandit said, "Offer me ten or five rupees of worship, then I will teach you."

So Bula Mishra returned home and sat there. His father asked, "Why did you come back home again? Will you study sitting at home? You have lived inside the house since birth, so you will only learn women's work. If you go outside, you will feel ashamed." Then Bula Mishra said, "When I go to study with someone, they ask for money. That is why I am now going to Kashi to study. Why do you scold me?"

Then the father said, "You do not even want to step outside the house. So how will you go to Kashi?" Then Bula Mishra rose, bowed to his father, and said, "I am going to Kashi." His father did not believe it. He thought, "How will he go alone? He will sit somewhere in a village." So the father said no.

But Bula Mishra left. On the way, he begged for flour in villages, baked it into bread, and ate. In this way, in a few days, he reached Kashi. There he sustained himself by begging and went to study with a pandit.

For three years he tried very hard to study, but he did not gain even a little knowledge. Then the pandit said, "We have taught many students, but I have never seen such a fool like you. For three years you struggled to learn, I struggled to teach. But you have not gained even the knowledge of letters. Now why do you grieve? Knowledge is not in your destiny."

Then Bula Mishra became very distressed. He thought, “I left home to study, endured so much suffering, but knowledge did not come. Therefore, I will die at the feet of Goddess Saraswati.” So he went far from Kashi to the bank of the Ganga where no person was there. He stopped taking water and sat there.

Three days and nights passed without taking even water. Then Saraswati appeared in the Ganga and said to Bula Mishra, “Why are you sitting on me to die? I am a maidservant of God. Wherever God sends me to teach, I go. In this world, the doer of all actions is only God. So you should worship God. If God is pleased, then whether it is knowledge or whatever you wish, you will receive it. If you sit to die upon me, you will die in vain. Without the will of God, I do not go to anyone. If it is God’s will, I may even go to a Shudra or a Chandala and make him a pandit. If it is not God’s will, then even a Brahmin remains ignorant. This I tell you. Now, if your mind wishes, then die or live. But knowledge will come only if it is God’s will.”

Then Bula Mishra said, “I cannot do God’s remembrance or bhajan. Until now I was dying upon you, but now I will die upon God. Only if knowledge comes will I drink water.” Then Saraswati went away.

Afterwards, he began chanting the name of God, “Vishnu, Vishnu,” day and night. Then God said to Saraswati, “You have made a Brahmin sit upon your head to die. Now go, it is my wish. Give him knowledge and feed him.”

So Saraswati, taking the form of a woman, came near Bula Mishra. She said, “Brahmin, open your eyes.” He asked, “Who are you?” She said, “I am Saraswati. God has sent me, so now I have come to you. Take as much knowledge as you want.”

Then Bula Mishra said, “Just yesterday you said that knowledge is not in my destiny. Today, why have you come to give knowledge?” Saraswati said, “This too is God’s wish, that you should now be given knowledge. That is why I have come.” Then Bula Mishra said, “Why is it God’s will to give me knowledge now? Before, it was not. If it had been before, then in three years of study, why did I not gain it? Why has God now sent you to me?”

Saraswati said, “You have chanted God’s name day and night. So God is pleased with you. Your sins have been removed. That is why God has sent me. You chanted God’s name with full heart. This is its power.” Then Bula Mishra said, “If God’s name is greater than God Himself, and by it God has been pleased, then I no longer want

knowledge. I have seen that God's name is greater than knowledge. So now you may go. I do not want knowledge. Now, if God Himself comes, then I will take His darshan, and only then will I accept something."

Then Saraswati went and told God, "Maharaj, he does not want knowledge. He wants your darshan." Then God was pleased, "At this time, who is there who would want only me? I too desire him."

Then God, from within the Ganga, spoke by voice, "Brahmin, now eat and drink. You have taken no water for five days. I am pleased with you. Take whatever boon you want, knowledge or anything." Then Bula Mishra said, "Maharaj, I want nothing. Please grant me only one darshan." Then God said, "In Adel, Shri Vallabhacharyaji is residing. Go there and take his refuge. There you will get my darshan."

Then Bula Mishra said, "Maharaj, please give me darshan once. If I see you, then I will not be bound by Maya. Otherwise, if I eat, associate with many people, then Maya will bind me. Then my mind and intelligence will not remain steady. If I go to Adel and die on the way, then what will I do?" God, pleased, gave darshan in His beautiful four-armed form and said, "Now you go to Adel. Shri Acharyaji will fulfill your wishes. And Maya will not bind you."

Then Bula Mishra, bowing, prayed, "Maharaj, forgive my offenses, for I argued with you. Who am I, a lowly being, compared to you, the Supreme Person? Yet what you said is true. But your Maya has made me wander in the world in many ways, giving me much pain. That is why I begged for your darshan."

Then God consoled Bula Mishra and disappeared. Bula Mishra ate and drank. Having realized the greatness of God's Name, his faith became firm. Chanting God's name constantly, he went towards Adel. In a few days, he arrived in Adel, had darshan of Shri Acharyaji, and bowed down.

Then Shri Acharyaji said to Bula Mishra, "You are blessed, for with such patience and firmness you attained darshan of God in this very body." Then Bula Mishra prayed to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj, I had darshan by your grace, but I have not experienced the bliss of God's form. Please grant me refuge, then it will happen." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Now what will you do by taking refuge? You have already attained God. God has given you a boon, saying you will not be bound by Maya. What is left for you to do?"

Then Bula Mishra said, “I do not want liberation which is attainment of God. I want devotion. That comes only by your grace. That is why I take refuge, so that I may gain devotion. This God Himself has told me. Therefore I have come to your refuge.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said to Bula Mishra, “Go bathe in Shri Yamunaji, then come.” So Bula Mishra bathed in Yamunaji and came to the assembly. Then Shri Acharyaji initiated him, recited the Name, and made him offer his submission. He made him recite Krishnaashraya Granth. Then Bula Mishra began to experience Shri Thakurji’s lila. He understood that the shelter of all the scriptures, Puranas, and Vedas is in Him. Shri Acharyaji granted him the fruit of mental service (Manasi Seva). His mind became fixed in Shri Thakurji.

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Now you should go home.” Then Bula Mishra prayed, “Maharaj, why are you sending me home? What work do I have at home?” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “I am sending you home so that by your association many souls will be uplifted, and devotion will spread. You will no longer suffer worldly sorrows. Wherever you live, you will be with me. And just as God is full of all power, so are the Bhagavadiyas (devotees of God). Therefore go home. Your parents are aged. By your association, they too will attain liberation. They think their son is either dead or alive. You will remove this doubt.”

Then Bula Mishra bowed down, took leave of Shri Acharyaji, and left. In a few days, he reached Lahore. His parents felt great happiness. Afterwards, Bula Mishra arranged his household, cooked food, and offered bhog to Shri Thakurji mentally. One portion he gave to his parents at home, from the milk of one cow. One portion was for Vaishnavas coming and going. If anyone was hungry, he gave them Mahaprasad to eat. He remained absorbed in the reading of Shrimad Bhagavat Subodhini and the works of Shri Acharyaji. Many Kshatriya yajmans were there, by whose support he lived.

Prasang 1 – The Harivansh Purana Reading

In Lahore there was a Kshatriya who was Bula Mishra’s yajman. He had two wives but no children. Someone told that Kshatriya, “If you listen to the Harivansh Purana, you will have a son.” Then that Kshatriya came to Bula Mishra and pleaded greatly, “Please recite the Harivansh Purana to me. By your grace, I will have a son.” Then Bula Mishra said, “Right now I do not have time. When I have time, then I will recite.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This means that if the son is destined by God's will, then by hearing Harivansh Purana, he will be born. If he is not destined, then why should Shri Thakurji be troubled? If by my reciting, Shri Thakurji must give a son to display my glory, then that is not proper. That is why he said, "When I have time, then I will recite."

Thus he dismissed him. But Shri Thakurji thought, "How can one who makes a request to a Bhagavadiya go away empty-handed?" Therefore Shri Thakurji said to Bula Mishra, "That Kshatriya will indeed have a son. You should recite to him."

Later, one day suddenly Bula Mishra went to the yajman Kshatriya's house. The Kshatriya received him with great honor and respect, touched his feet with his own hands, placed them on his head, and seated him on a fine seat.

Then Bula Mishra told the Kshatriya, “You and your wives should bathe, wear new clothes, and sit.” So both husband and wife bathed, wore new clothes, and sat. Then Bula Mishra read one verse from the Harivansh Purana:

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इदं मया ते ह रकीतनं महत ् श्रीकृष्णमाहात्म्यं परमभुतम्।

This great praise of Hari has been recited by me to you. It is the supreme and wondrous

glory of Shri Krishna.

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Then he explained, “This glorification of Shri Krishna, His fame, is of supreme and wondrous greatness. Whoever hears it gains immense fortune, which is very rare. In this verse all fruits are obtained.” Afterwards, he read the mantra and gave akshat (grains) into the lap of the elder wife.

Then that Kshatriya said to Bula Mishra, “Why did you do this? The elder wife is not capable of having children according to the woman's nature. Why did you not give it to the younger wife?” Then Bula Mishra said, “If Shri Thakurji wishes to give a son, He will give it to her only. Shri Thakurji is all-powerful.” Saying this, Bula Mishra rose and went home. Then that Kshatriya said, “Please kindly recite the whole Harivansh Purana to me.”

Bula Mishra replied, “Your wish for a son will be fulfilled by listening to this much only. You desired the fruit of a son, you will have a son. The fruit of listening to the whole Purana is what you already desired. Now what is the need to hear the whole Purana?”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Bula Mishra said this because he did not have leisure to recite the whole Purana. By God’s will, he had only spoken this much. So, the elder wife conceived and later gave birth to a son.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this story, the greatness of the Bhagavadiya (devotee of God) is declared. The Bhagavadiya is giver of both devotion and liberation. If they wish, they can unite someone directly with Shri Thakurji. What then is a son? That is a trivial fruit. The true meaning is that they do not give a worldly son,

but a divine son. That son became a sevak of Shri Gusainji and brought welfare to the whole family.

Therefore, whatever the Bhagavadiya gives, it is extraordinary. If they give something worldly, it is not the same. For who is truly called a son? The one who redeems his parents. Otherwise, sons like those of animals—dogs, donkeys, etc.—are also born. If worldly sons are like that, they are equal to animals. Therefore, Bula Mishra gave the kind of son praised in the scriptures.

Thus, Bula Mishra was greatly favored by Shri Acharyaji's grace. He remained always immersed in the nectar of God, absorbed in Manasi Seva. Therefore, the story of Bula Mishra is told up to this point.

Varta 47 - Ramdas Purohit

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Ramdas, a Mewada Brahmin, was the Purohit (family priest) of Mirabai. He lived in Mewar. Here is the narration of his story.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): He is the companion of Shri Syamini Ji's friend, Visakha. In the lila his name is "Kandarpa." She always sang the kirtan of Shri Swaminiji's name. Her form was very beautiful.

One day, Kandarpa was decorating herself. At that time, Shri Swaminiji arrived. Kandarpa was engaged in her adornment and did not get up. Then Visakha cursed her, "Such pride! You did not rise and show respect to our Swaminiji? Fall to the earth!" In this way, after many births, she was born in the house of a Brahmin in Mewar. When she was twenty-two years old, Ramdas's father took Ramdas along to have darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. At that place, Shri Acharyaji had arrived. Ramdas had darshan of him.

Then Ramdas said to his father, "It would be good if you and I become sevaks of Shri Acharyaji." His father said, "He is a Brahmin, we too are Brahmins. Whose sevaks shall we become? You are speaking without thinking. Say such things later, if you wish." Ramdas remained silent. Later, secretly from his father, he went to Shri Acharyaji, bowed down, and prayed, "Maharaj! My heart greatly desires to become your sevak. If my father too becomes a sevak, then the divine path will remain established in our home, and there will be no conflict. Please show my father some sign of your greatness, so that he too may become your sevak. For he is an ignorant soul, filled with pride."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "You are a Devi. Your father is ordinary. Because of you, he will be uplifted. What you spoke to your father will indeed come true. You yourself must show him my greatness." Then Ramdas bowed and returned to his father. His father was cooking. While cooking, his entire hand got burned. The father became very distressed. Then Ramdas said, "I will tell you something, if you agree." The father said, "Say it."

Ramdas said, "I will take water in my hand and offer it before you. If Shri Acharyaji is truly Bhagavan Himself, then by this water your

hand will be healed. If otherwise, then your hand will not be healed. I will pour this water on your hand with this condition. If your hand is healed, then become Shri Acharyaji's sevak." The father said, "Yes, yes, if it happens in this way, then I will become a sevak."

Then Ramdas took water in his hand and said, "If Shri Acharyaji is Bhagavan Himself, then may this water heal my father's hand." Saying this, Ramdas poured the water on his father's hand. His hand was healed. Then Ramdas said, "Come now, let us become Shri Acharyaji's sevaks." But the father said, "Son, you have become mad. This was already written in my fate. By my own merit I have been healed. Let me cook."

Then Ramdas, full of anger, said, "If even now you deny, then may you become blind in both eyes." Immediately, boils appeared in both eyes and he became blind. Then the father said to Ramdas, "What have you done? Now I will become a sevak. Whatever you say, I will do. If my eyes are healed." Ramdas said, "Only if you become Shri Acharyaji's sevak will your eyes be healed. Otherwise, you will suffer greatly." The father said, "Let us go quickly. Later we will do other work."

So Ramdas held his father's hand and brought him to Shri Acharyaji. They bowed down. The father prayed, "Maharaj! I saw your well-known power, yet it did not enter my mind. That is why I became blind. Now I have come to your refuge. Remove my suffering." Then Shri Acharyaji said to Ramdas, "You go bathe in Shri Yamunaji. Let your father remain sitting here."

Ramdas bathed in Shri Yamunaji and came back to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji initiated Ramdas, recited the Name, and gave him Brahmasambandh. Afterwards, he recited the Name and gave Brahmasambandh to his father also. Then Ramdas took Shri Acharyaji's charanamrit himself and touched it to his father's eyes, saying, "Now may your eyes open as before." His father's eyes were healed.

Then the father bowed to Shri Acharyaji and said, "Maharaj, now what is my duty? Tell me what will bring me happiness." Shri Acharyaji said, "If you remain obedient to your son Ramdas, then you will always be happy, you will be uplifted, and you will attain liberation." Then Ramdas said, "Maharaj! Please grant me the seva of God." Then Shri Acharyaji gave him prasadi cloth and said, "Do this seva with devotion." Then Ramdas bowed, took his father, and returned to their dwelling. Later he told his father, "Now I will cook,

and you please do the offering." The father said, "I will do whatever you say."

Then Ramdas cooked, offered bhog to vastra seva. Afterwards, he gave a portion of the mahaprasad to his father's, a portion to cow, and the himself took. Later, Shri Acharyaji went to Adel, and Ramdas, with his father, returned to Mewar and lived at home. The whole household lived under Ramdas's direction.

Prasang 1 – Ramdas and Mirabai

Later, one day Ramdas went to Mirabai's place. There, before Mirabai's Thakurji, he was singing Shri Acharyaji's kirtan. Then Mirabai said, "Please sing some Vishnu pada to Shri Thakurji." Then Ramdas, angered, said, "Wicked widow! Are these your husband's songs? From today onwards, I will not see your face."

So he left that village with his family. Though Mirabai pleaded greatly and offered him dakshina, he did not accept anything. He left with his family and went to another village. Thus Ramdas was such a firm and specially favored Bhagavadiya. He was so attached to his Lord that he never again looked at Mirabai's face.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This story shows that, first of all, one should not go to those of other paths. And if one goes, then one should not speak of one's own path. One should not perform the kirtan of one's own path there. If one does, there will be conflict. Therefore Shri Gusainji has said in Chaturjhoki:

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' वजातीयजनाक्रान्ते नजधमस्य गोपनम ्। देशे वधाय सततं स्थेय मत्येव भावये ॥१॥

When surrounded by people of other paths, one should conceal one's own dharma. While

living in such a place, one should always remain firm in this resolve.

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That means, while living in a foreign land, one should keep one's own dharma concealed. So, when Ramdas sang Shri Acharyaji's kirtan at that time, Shri Govardhandhar thought, "Since Ramdas has sung Shri Acharyaji's kirtan, then he will also speak of the path." Therefore, through Mirabai it was said, "Sing to Shri Thakurji." Then Ramdas realized, "What have I done? I have made Shri Govardhandhar exert

Himself."

So he thought in his mind, "Now it is not proper to drink water in this village. For if we remain in this village, we may have to see the face of Mirabai. We are Brahmins, and moreover, the priests of Mirabai. The greed for wealth in this world is so bad. From greed, dharma is lost. Therefore, not taking water in this village, with all his family he left and went to another village." Therefore, the story of Ramdas is told only up to this point.

Varta 48 - Ramdas Chauhan

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Ramdas Chauhan, Rajput, resident of Bundelkhand, his story's inner meaning is spoken.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the leela he is a friend of Lalitaji. So her name is 'Madhuyeni'. So in her mind there was this wish, that just like Lalitaji I too should offer beedi to both the forms. Then Shri Thakurji said, your desire will be fulfilled sometime. Hearing this, Lalitaji cursed Madhuyeni, saying – If you secretly offer beedi, then what will I do? You have shown such pride, go live on earth! So in the world she took many births. Now in Bundelkhand she was born in the house of a Rajput. There she became twelve years old. The father of Ramdas was a sevak of the king in Bundelkhand.

The father said one day, come, I will take you to meet the king. Because if you meet the king daily, then you will get service under him. Then Ramdas said, I will not go to the king. Because I will not salute the king, and I will not do the king's service. I will do service only of Shri Thakurji, in which my birth will be uplifted. What use is the service of the king? Hearing this, the father said, you have met some vairagi who has deluded you. If you do not serve the king, then from where will you eat? Then Ramdas said, does the king nourish the whole world? Nourishment is done by Shri Thakurji. You are a fool, that's why you think that our nourishment is done by the king.

Hearing this, the father felt very troubled in his mind. But having only one beloved son, he did not say anything. He kept one man in the house so that no vairagi could come there. Because by the company of some vairagi, Ramdas has become like this. So the man was kept on guard. And Ramdas used to chant 'Ram Krishna'. He did not speak to anyone else, did not talk. This matter was heard by a Rajput, and he told everything about Ramdas to the king. Then the king said to Ramdas's father, go and bring your son here. He has grown so big, and you did not bring him to me? Then Ramdas's father folded his hands before the king and fearfully said, my son's mind has been spoiled by the company of some vairagi. He does not consider me either. I have kept a guard so that he does not meet any vairagi. Maybe in a few days he will understand, then I will bring him, right now he is ignorant.

Then the king said, explain to him and bring him to me tomorrow,

otherwise I will summon him and keep him imprisoned. Then how will he escape? And we have heard that he does not salute me. Let us see, how he will not salute? Then Ramdas's father came home frightened and said to Ramdas, nothing has yet gone wrong, come to the king, meet him, otherwise the king will imprison you. Then Ramdas said, why do you try to frighten me? Whatever prison and sorrow is written in fate will not go away from anyone. I will myself go to the king. Then the father kept explaining, but Ramdas did not agree.

So the next day came. The king said to Ramdas's father, you did not bring your son, so this is your fault. Now beware, I will deal with you. Then Ramdas's father fearfully said to the king, do not be angry with me, the son is in the house, call him and explain to him yourself. I explained a lot, he did not listen. Then the king summoned ten men and said, bring Ramdas. Then the men came and said to Ramdas, the king has called you. Then Ramdas said, what do I have to do with the king? I will not come. Then the men caught hold of Ramdas's hands, tied him and brought him to the king. They told everything – that he said what do I have to do with the king? So we tied him and brought him.

Then the king said to Ramdas, if you do not salute me I will beat you and imprison you. Then Ramdas said, you protect yourself, how will you beat me? Then the king told his men, keep him in prison, beat him somewhat, frighten him. Do not give him food. In such a way, when he becomes straight and salutes me, then do so. So Ramdas was put in prison and given many sufferings. Ramdas did not speak anything. The queen of the king heard this matter and said to the king, what work have you done? If a twelve-year-old boy did not salute you, then what happened? You have given him so much suffering, this is not good. Who knows, maybe some bad fruit may come of this. Therefore, even now release that boy. In this way the queen explained. But the king did not agree.

So on the third day, at midnight, from the south came the army of another king. Battle happened. That king killed this king and looted the village. Ramdas's father fled somewhere. Everyone was freed from prison. Then Ramdas left Bundelkhand and came to Mathura. Later, seeing the whole of Braj, he became pleased. Then he thought, if my father comes out somewhere, he may take me away. So he stayed in a cave at Govardhan called 'Apchhara Kund'. He sat inside it all day, chanting the name of Bhagavan. When night came, then from the houses of the people of Braj he begged whatever he got and sustained himself with it.

Prasang 1 – Shri Acharyaji's Sevak Ramdas begins service of

Shri Nathji

So when Shri Acharyaji first manifested Shri Nathji, then a small temple was built, and after covering it with thatch, Shri Nathji was seated on the seat. Then Shri Thakurji revealed to Ramdas, you will be the sevak of Shri Acharyaji, do my service.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Because in the leela you begged from me, that the service of Lalitaji should come to me. So I had said, sometime it will be fulfilled. That time is now fulfilled, so now the time for your service has come.

Then Ramdas came and bowed to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji called Ramdas near, asked his name and dedication, and said, you do the service of Shri Nathji. From the houses of Brajvasis whatever milk, curd, food grains come, you offer them to Shri Govardhannathji and then live with that. Later Shri Acharyaji told Sadu Pandey, Kumbhandas and other Brajvasis, you all keep Shri Nathji safe. Afterwards milk, curd, butter, grains, groceries, and all materials the Brajvasis used to bring. Ramdas used to offer bhog and live. Later, when Shri Nathji gave permission to Puranmal for building the temple, then Puranmal came and began the construction. Then wealth was exhausted. Again after earning and bringing, he completed the temple. Then Ramdas left his body. He attained leela.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Because his heartfelt wish was for exclusive service. So after serving alone he entered into leela.

Prasang 2 – Service of Shri Nathji in the new temple

Now the glory of Shri Nathji was to be increased, so he was seated in the new temple. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Sadu Pandey, if ten-fifteen Brajvasis are capable of service, then let them do service. Then Sadu Pandey said, Maharaj! Service cannot be done by Brajvasis, they have household work. Then Shri Acharyaji called Bengalis from Radhakund, gave them a hut at Rudrakund, and gave them the service of Shri Nathji.

Later Krishnadas Adhikari removed the Bengalis and made Ramdas

Sanchora Brahmin the chief of the inner temple. This is all told in the story of Krishnadas. The Brajvasis at first called him Devadaman. Later when a cow named Gopal happened, they began calling him by that name. Later Shri Acharyaji gave the name Govardhannath. In this way Ramdas did service with devotion, and remained absorbed in manasi seva (mental service). So Ramdas, such a steadfast and blessed Vaishnav! That is why his story is spoken till here.

Varta 49 - Ramananda Pandit

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Ramananda Pandit, a Saraswat Brahmin of Thaneshwar—the feeling of his account is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): He is a night-guard (tamchar) in the Nikunj. So once, after six hours of the night had passed, this night-guard cried out. Then Shri Thakurji understood; it was morning, so He arose. Then Lalita and the other sakhis said, "It is still very much night." Then Shri Swaminiji, becoming angry, said, "What work does such a bird have here? He has caused the mind's distress at a time not proper. Therefore let him have birth in the world."

Then that night-guard obtained many births in the world. So now, in Thaneshwar, he was born in the house of a Saraswat Brahmin. In Thaneshwar he was married; he became thirty years old. Then his mother & father left the body. Thus the husband and wife lived. They read the Bhagavat and other Puranas, telling kathas. Therefore everyone called him Pandit. He used to discuss with people. So once Shri Acharyaji came to Thaneshwar, then Ramananda came to engage in discussion. Then in front of Shri Acharyaji his speech became blocked. He said something; something came out, something did not.

Then Shri Acharyaji said to Ramananda, "You have come to debate; why are you speaking like this?" Then shame came to Ramananda, so he went home and sat to worship and chant for Saraswati. And he said, "Only if Saraswati is pleased will I drink water." Day and night he sat thus; three days passed. Then Saraswati was pleased and said, "I am pleased; ask whatever comes to your mind." Then Ramananda Pandit said, "Let no Pandit defeat me; I shall defeat everyone. This is what I ask." Then Saraswati said, "Go; it shall be so."

Then, becoming proud, he again came to Shri Acharyaji to debate. But again, just the same, his speech was blocked; he uttered something, and some words he tried to say. Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Now you, having pleased Saraswati, have come to debate; so why do you speak like this again?" Then great shame came to Ramananda. He went home and in the same manner again performed the propitiation of Saraswati. Then Saraswati again, being pleased, said to Ramananda, "Now what do you ask? I have given you vidya."

Then Ramananda said, “Where have you given me vidya? I went to debate with Shri Acharyaji; there nothing at all comes forth as an answer.” Then Saraswati said, “I have given you a boon to defeat Pandits; I did not say anything about defeating Ishwar. Shri Acharyaji is Lord Shri Krishnachandra Himself. And you went to debate with Him. Then how will you defeat Him? Therefore, if you desire your own good, go to the shelter of Shri Acharyaji; be freed from the world and be fulfilled. And you will never defeat Him.”

Then Ramananda, going, made prostration to Shri Acharyaji and petitioned, “Maharaj! I did not know your true form. You are Ishwar Himself. And I say that I am a jiva. By showing me mercy, take me into your shelter. Forgive my offense, that I, applying the intellect of seeing you as a jiva, came to debate.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “You are a Pandit; how will you be called our sevak?” Then Ramananda said, “Maharaj! Now do not let my mind go astray; I have come into your shelter; accept me.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Go, bathe and come.” Then Ramananda Pandit, bathing in the Saraswati, came to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji had the Name-dedication (naam-nivedan) performed.

Then Ramananda petitioned, “Maharaj! Please come to my house. Please pronounce the name to my wife” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Now preparations are for going on the circumambulation of the earth, therefore quickly bring your wife here; we will pronounce the Name. Later we will again come to Thaneshwar. Then we will stay at your house.” Then Ramananda went home and brought his wife. Then Shri Acharyaji pronounced the Name to Ramananda’s wife. Then Ramananda said, “Maharaj! Grant me Bhagavad-seva.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “You have the book of Shrimad Bhagavat; you place bhog upon it. And service is difficult for you.” Then, making prostration, Ramananda came to his home with his wife. Shri Acharyaji set forth on the circumambulation of the earth.

Prasang 1: The offense of speaking about cow dung

Later, once, Shri Acharyaji came to Thaneshwar. That night he stayed at Ramananda’s house.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this it is conveyed that cooking and the kitchen-work should be done in a Vaishnav’s house.

So in the previous night Ramananda arose and said to his wife,

“Quickly, collect the cow-dung; otherwise the Vaishnavs will get up and take away all the cow-dung.” This speech of Ramananda was heard by Shri Acharyaji. So he arose and in his mind became greatly angry: “In this manner he speaks of cow-dung—‘they will pick it up and take it away’! Then what other regard will he have for Vaishnavs? Vaishnavs are dearer to me than life, and to them he has said such words.”

Then Shri Acharyaji, in anger, took water in his hand, read Vedic mantras, sprinkled it upon Ramananda, and said, “I have renounced you.” Saying this, at that very moment, he took along with him the Vaishnavs who were in his company and arose and departed from there. Three kos from Thaneshwar there is a village “Amītirth”; going there, he performed bathing and sandhya. And when Shri Acharyaji, arising from Ramananda’s house, began to depart, at that time the Vaishnavs of Thaneshwar made much entreaty: “Maharaj! Please come to our homes.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Now at this time I will not take water in this village.” Saying this, he departed; he did not stay.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Thus, one who commits an offense to Shri Acharyaji—he gives you punishment and forgives. But an offense to a Vaishnav—one does not quickly become free; therefore he did not stay in this village. And when, in Shri Gokul, the command of Brahmasambandh was given by Shri Thakurji to Shri Acharyaji, then Shri Thakurji said, “Those for whom you will perform Brahmasambandh—I will not abandon them.” So, to demonstrate the test, Shri Acharyaji, finding a pretext of offense, enacted renunciation.

So that this would come out correctly. And Shri Acharyaji became very angry thus, that Ramananda said to his wife, “Quickly pick up the cow-dung; otherwise the Vaishnavs will take it.” Since he uttered the name “Vaishnav,” anger arose. If one mentions the name of some Vaishnav (then) even one or two would be considered offended. Here he said “Vaishnavs.” So, among Vaishnavs, the chief—Braj-bhakts and others—all were thus included in the statement.

Therefore great anger arose in Shri Acharyaji. Because, in the Navaratna it is said

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नवेदनं तु स्मत्तव्यं सवथातादृशेर प ।

Offering must indeed be remembered in every way, even in such a case.

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Remember offering (nivedan) in every way, even in such a case. If one remembers nivedan together with such Vaishnavs, then the fruit of the offering—the feeling—should be understood. So to speak thus about cow-dung with respect to Vaishnavs? And in the Dhol (text) it is said, “Having offered body, mind, and wealth, follow the Vaishnavs.” And this kirtan

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(राग केदारो | Raga Kedaro)

हो वारी इन वल्लभीयन पर। मेरे तन को करों बछोना सीस धरों इनके चरनन तर ॥ १॥

I am devoted to these Vallabhiyas. Make my body a bedding; place my head beneath their

feet.

भाव भ र देखो मेरी अँ खयन मण्डल मध्य बराजत ग रधर। ये तो मेरे प्रान जीवन धन दान दये हैं श्रीवल्लभ वर

।॥२॥॥

Fill my eyes with feeling and see: in the circle’s midst sits Giridhar. It is they who gave

me life, wealth, and gifts—Shri Vallabh the bestower.

माया वाद खण्डखण्डन को प्रगट भये श्री वद्वल द् वजवर। 'र सक' कहै आस इनकी क र वल्लभीयन की चरनरज

अनुसर ॥३॥

The destroyer of Maya-vada, the illustrious learned Dwija, appeared. Says Rasik: having

taken refuge in them, follow the dust of the feet of the Vallabhiyas.

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This feeling should arise in a Vaishnav. Yet he said of Vaishnavs, “They will pick up and take away the cow-dung.” Thus Vaishnavs were deemed thieves of cow-dung. Therefore Shri Acharyaji, becoming angry, gave instruction to all Vaishnavs: “Speak with care.” He showed that love must be maintained for Vaishnavs.

Prasang 2: The jalebi offering and Shri Nathji's acceptance

Later Shri Acharyaji set forth on the circumambulation of the earth. Here, because of Shri Acharyaji's rejection, Ramananda became distressed. He ate and drank here and there in the bazaar. All propriety fell away. However, this much propriety remained: whatever he would eat and drink, first he would say, "I offer to Shri Govardhannathji." In this manner, making samarpan, he would eat.

So one day Ramananda was walking in the bazaar; a halwai was making jalebis. Seeing them fresh, Ramananda bought them and there in the bazaar said, "I offer to Shri Govardhannathji." In this manner, making samarpan, he ate the jalebis. And at the time when Ramananda offered the jalebis to Shri Nathji, Shri Acharyaji was at Shri Nathji's door. The Rajbhog of Shri Nathji had come. So at that time, when it was time, Shri Acharyaji entered the temple to offer the bhog. Then ācha̱man and wiping of the mouth-cloth were done.

Then, seeing a piece of jalebi in Shri Nathji's lotus-mouth, Shri Acharyaji said to Shri Nathji, "Today there is no special festival. How have jalebis been offered?" Then Shri Nathji said, "Your sevak has offered jalebis to me. So I have eaten." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Which Vaishnav has offered jalebis?" Then Shri Nathji said, "Ramananda Pandit of the village of Thaneshwar has offered, so I have eaten." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "But I have rejected him; how have you eaten his samarpit?"

Then Shri Nathji said, "I have given you my word: those to whom you perform Brahma-sambandh I will never abandon. Therefore you may renounce, but how can I, who gave my word earlier, abandon him?" Then Shri Acharyaji remained silent. After completing the observances, Shri Acharyaji went out from the temple. Then Damodardas Harsani said, "From Ramananda Pandit's hand, Shri Nathji ate jalebi; and He says, 'How can I leave him?'" Then Damodardas asked, "Maharaj! You have rejected him, and Shri Nathji has taken his side. So when will you accept that jiva?" Then Shri Acharyaji said, "If now he does not commit offense to Vaishnavs, then I will accept him in a hundred-thousand births. What happened if Shri Nathji ate jalebi?"

Later, a Vaishnav, after having darshan of Shri Nathji, went to Thaneshwar. Then Ramananda asked that Vaishnav, "Has my matter ever been spoken of before Shri Acharyaji?" Then that Vaishnav said,

“From your hand Shri Nathji ate jalebi. Then Damodardas Harsani asked Shri Acharyaji, ‘When will you accept Ramananda?’ Then Shri Acharyaji said, ‘If from today onward he does not commit offense to Vaishnavs, then in a hundred-thousand births I will accept him.’ This much matter was spoken.” Then, becoming happy, Ramananda said, “Good! It has been said that in a hundred-thousand births I will be accepted.”

Thereafter Ramananda’s intellect became beautiful. He began to fear the offense to Vaishnavs. Pride in being a Pandit had been there; therefore offense occurred—so humility arose. Later, through a dream, after having him exhaust the hundred-thousand births, by grace Shri Acharyaji accepted him. Thus Ramananda is such a recipient of Shri Acharyaji’s grace—belonging to Bhagavan. Therefore his account should be told as far as this.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): “Accepted” why is it said so? Shri Acharyaji gives punishment to a Vaishnav. That is for instruction. It is not personal abandonment. Just as a mother and father give punishment to a son for instruction only. They will not do ill to the son. Know it thus. If abandonment from the inner heart had occurred in Shri Acharyaji, then Shri Nathji would never eat the article from his hand. Because he is Shri Acharyaji’s sevak. Therefore as the wish of Shri Acharyaji is, in that very manner does Shri Nathji act. For if Shri Acharyaji were even slightly displeased, then Shri Thakurji would never accept him. Therefore if Shri Acharyaji abandoned him, how would Shri Govardhandhar eat the article from his hand?

Hence there was no inner abandonment in Shri Acharyaji’s heart. Therefore Shri Acharyaji, sprinkling water with Vedic mantras, enacted abandonment only according to propriety and rite. This was to show people, so that all would know that there is a renunciation. But those who know the divine play (lila-srishti) who are divine know that they are forms of Shri Acharyaji’s very limbs. As there is no abandonment of a limb, so there is no abandonment of a divine jiva. Therefore Shri Nathji ate. Hence Shri Acharyaji has said in “Antahkarana-Prabodh”:

चांडाली चेद्राजपत्नी जाता राज्ञा च मा नता। कदा चदपमानेऽ प मूलतःका क्ष तभवेत ्॥१॥।

“Even if a chandal woman becomes the king’s wife, she is honored by the king. Even if

sometimes there is an insult, is there any loss at the root?”

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And in the Navaratna granth it is said:

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अज्ञानादथवा ज्ञानात्कृतमात्म नवेदनम्। यैः कृष्णसात कृतप्राणस्तेषां का प रवेदना ॥।

“Whether in ignorance or in knowledge, those by whom self-offering has been made—

They whose lives are made over to Krishna—what grief or distress can there be for

them?”

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One whose offering, whether knowingly or unknowingly has been made in Bhagavan, who has become dear to Shri Krishna like life what pain, sorrow, or anxiety can there be for him? Therefore, through Ramananda, to manifest so much doctrine, he enacted renunciation according to propriety and rite. Just as, in the Ram Panchadhyayi, seeing honor for the devotees, the Lord became invisible did He thereby abandon them?

The Lord does not abandon the devotees at all. From the outside He entered and sat in their hearts. In the same manner, in front of everyone, renunciation was enacted. Thus the offense to a Vaishnav was shown to be so grave. And to speak to a Vaishnav with care. Because shelter and non-shelter both lie within words.

That woman became pleased with a worldly man and said, “You revived me,” then Shri Thakurji rose up and departed. And from Rajo Kshetrani, when Shri Acharyaji asked for ghee, it was not given. And at night, making entreaty, the article was offered. Thus one word of pride destroys the entire dharma; one word of joy brings the Lord to be immediately pleased.

Therefore, to a Vaishnav, to speak with care this was shown. And that they are great jivas this firmness was shown. In Pushtimarg, eligibility was established. Shri Thakurji did not leave for so little; He ate the jalebi. The samarpani (one who offers) is not rejected. Shri Thakurji’s words were made firm: that He gave the command of Brahma-

sambandh.

Then He said, “Those to whom you perform Brahma-sambandh I will not leave them.” This also is said. Here that promise was carefully shown. And to the Vaishnav, Shri Govardhandhar showed this: that though Ramananda became fallen and distressed, still, offering to Shri Nathji, he ate and drank he did not abandon even that much propriety. And those Vaishnavs who eat without offering know that they have gone far beyond even Ramananda; consider the abandonment to be for them. Therefore, take nothing without proper time (and offering). And Shri Acharyaji, having renounced Ramananda, did not stay there this itself shows that there was no inner abandonment.

For had he stayed there, then, by entreaty, he would have again become pleased. Then would so much doctrine have been manifested? And if Shri Acharyaji were at Shri Nathji’s door, then let the jalebi be offered by Ramananda right then. The reason for this is that all the Vaishnavs would take it that Ramananda had been abandoned, so it was shown that there was no abandonment. Ramananda sits beside Shri Nathji. This shows that the worldly, Vedic body there became distressed the one which was renounced. The other, the supramundane, divine body is beside Shri Govardhandhar there he serves. Such feelings were manifested and shown.

Varta 50 - Vishnudas Chhipa

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Vishnudas Chhipa. He lived in a village near Agra. The sentiment of his account is being told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In lila, she is a friend of Shri Chandravaliji. Her name is Kamala. So he appeared in the house of a Chhipa in a village near Agra. Then he grew up and at the age of about twenty years, his marriage took place. His father printed cloth and Vishnudas would go to Agra to sell it. While doing so, at one time Shri Acharyaji came to Agra. So Vishnudas went to Agra carrying bolts of beautiful printed cloth. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Krishnadas, “This Chhipa has good printed cloth. Take it; give him whatever he asks.” Then Krishnadas said to Vishnudas, “Give me all these bolts of printed cloth. Whatever their price is, take it.” So Vishnudas quoted four times the price. Then Krishnadas counted out all the rupees and said, “If there are other good bolts, bring those too.”

Then Vishnudas began to wonder: “These are such great Mahapurushas, beings beyond the world. They did not bargain. They took all the bolts and gave their price. It is not proper for me to give my printed cloth to them. If their money comes to my house, the whole household will become detached from the world.” Then Vishnudas said, “Please take back all your rupees and return my bolts of printed cloth.” Then Krishnadas said, “Do you seem like a great fool? You named the price, and I paid it. Now these bolts will never return. If you have a loss, then take even more rupees. I have already paid four times the price.”

Then Vishnudas said, “You are Mahapurushas; therefore if your wealth comes into my house, the whole household will become renunciant. For this reason I will not sell to you. If I return the bolts, then please also keep these rupees, and also keep the bolts. But your rupees do not sit well with me.” Then Krishnadas said, “These bolts were praised from the holy mouth of Shri Acharyaji, who said, ‘Take them.’ Even if you make a crore of efforts, these bolts will not return. And Shri Acharyaji does not take anything from anyone other than a sevak. Therefore, take as many of the rupees as your mind accepts, and take the bolts if your mind accepts. If your mind wishes, then do not take them at all.”

Then Vishnudas said, “Where is Shri Acharyaji?” Then Krishnadas

said, “He is seated under that peepal tree.” Then Vishnudas came, took the darshan of Shri Acharyaji, prostrated, and said, “Maharaj! If there is so much dharma in your sevak, then you are indeed Bhagavan. Now take me into refuge.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “How can I take you into refuge? You live among cloth-printers. How will you uphold the dharma of the Pushtimarg—its conduct and practices?” Then Vishnudas made a request, “Maharaj! Now I have become your sevak. Then what fear is there of caste and social dealings? If my mother and father agree and become your sevaks, I will live with them; if not, I will make a separate household and live apart. Therefore, please be gracious and grant refuge.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Go, bathe in Shri Yamunaji and come.” Then Vishnudas bathed in Shri Yamunaji and, while returning in a state of wetness, someone touched him. Some person’s used leaf-plate flew and touched his body. Then he turned back to go for bathing again. Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Vishnudas, why are you going again?” Then Vishnudas said, “Maharaj! A leaf-plate flew and touched my body, so I became touched (impure). Therefore I am going to bathe again.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Even now you consider yourself touched by contact?” Then Vishnudas made a request, “Maharaj! How would I know? Who says what? Only through your grace will understanding dawn.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Stand here; we also have to perform the midday sandhya on the bank of Shri Yamunaji. Therefore, there we will speak your name.” Then Vishnudas made a request, “Maharaj! Do not take this trouble for me. I will bathe and come. If you come by your own wish, then come happily; if you come for me, then the fault will fall upon me.” Then Shri Acharyaji, becoming pleased, said, “For a Vaishnav like you we have descended in the lila itself. And we are performing parikrama. We refute Mayavada and establish the path of bhakti. We have made many scriptures for all Vaishnavas. Therefore why do you say, ‘Do not take the trouble’?” Then Vishnudas said, “Maharaj, I should be the one to say this. This is the dharma of a sevak.”

Then Shri Acharyaji went to the bank of Shri Yamunaji, bathed Vishnudas, spoke his name, and gave him Brahma-sambandha. Then Vishnudas made a request, “Maharaj! I am foolish, so please show such grace that I may have some knowledge of your scriptures like Shri Bhagavata, etc., and that I may come to know the siddhanta of your path.” Then Shri Acharyaji composed the scripture “Sevaphal” and recited it to Vishnudas. After listening, Vishnudas made a request, “Maharaj! By hearing the scripture Sevaphal, knowledge of all the

shastras and Puranas has arisen. But the intended purport of the Sevaphal scripture has not come to my understanding." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "The scripture Sevaphal is indeed difficult in this way. You have asked well." After that, he composed and recited the "Commentary on Sevaphal." Then the entire siddhanta of the path became firmly seated in the heart of Vishnudas. He became absorbed in bliss.

Then Krishnadas said, "These bolts of your printed cloth are here; if you want, take them. Either take the price or offer them as a gift." Then Vishnudas made a request to Krishnadas, "Through your association I obtained the refuge of Shri Acharyaji. So do not say such things to me, who am devoted to Bhagavan. Who gifts to whom some printed cloth? This entire life and body—wherever Shri Acharyaji says—there arrange their use." Then Krishnadas, becoming pleased, kept silent. After that, Shri Acharyaji said to the Vaishnavas, "Now you all go to your homes." Then Vishnudas said, "Maharaj! Now my home is in the dust of your lotus feet. Leaving that, where shall I go?" Then Shri Acharyaji, becoming pleased, said, "That is true, but we are going to Adele. You remain in that village. Later, when Shri Gusainji will reside in Shri Gokul, then you go to Gokul and stay near Shri Gusainji. Now the world will not be able to obstruct you. Therefore live wherever your mind wishes. And you are related to the lila of Shri Gusainji. Therefore, Shri Gusainji will fulfill all your desires. We have accepted and made you our own. You will always remain absorbed in the service of Bhagavan."

Then Vishnudas prostrated and came to his village. Shri Acharyaji went to Adele and had the printed cloth of Vishnudas accepted by Shri Navanitpriyaji. Here, when Vishnudas came home, he said to his mother and father, "I will live separately." Then the mother and father said, "What is the reason to live separately?" Then Vishnudas said, "My mind desires only this. So I will live separately." Later his wife came. Then he said to his wife, "You perform the service of Shri Thakurji. Then go to Adele and I will have you made a sevak. I will accept the water from your hand only then; otherwise do not come near me." Then the wife hurled ten or twenty abuses and left. She said, "If you have taken the name of worshiping Shri Thakurji, then I will not look at your face. Let some woman ascetic or faqirni worship Thakurji. How will I, with my mother, father, and brothers, worship?"

Then Vishnudas became pleased in his mind that Shri Thakurji removed the calamity. "Good indeed; she left me of her own accord." Then Vishnudas printed a little cloth, went to Agra to sell it, from which his bodily maintenance would happen. And all other times, day

and night, he remained immersed in mental seva, absorbed in the meanings of Shri Subodhiniji, the scripture of Shri Acharyaji.

Prasang 1 – Taking Shelter on the Steps (Pauri)

In due course of time Shri Gusainji took up residence in Shri Gokul. Then Vishnudas Chhipa had become old. He came to Shri Gokul, prostrated to Shri Gusainji, and made a request, narrating everything in full—how Shri Acharyaji graciously gave him refuge, and later entrusted him to you; "I have come to your refuge. Keep me in some service." Then Shri Gusainji, being pleased with Vishnudas, said, "You are a sevak who is the recipient of Shri Acharyaji's grace, so say where we should keep you." Then Vishnudas thought, "Now I have become old, and service will not be upheld till the end of life. Therefore I will live on the steps (pauri) of Shri Gusainji."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): That is why Surdasji has sung: "Stopping me on the path, he fell obstinately at the doorway, O chief of the fallen, Sur." So I have fallen. At the doorway of Shri Gusainji I will become purified; Shri Gusainji, coming and going, will give me darshan. Thinking thus, Vishnudas said, "Maharaj! My mind wishes to live on your steps." Then Shri Gusainji said, "Good, live on the steps." Then Vishnudas lived on the steps. So when Shri Gusainji arrived, he would call out to Vishnudas, "Is Vishnudas pleased?" Then Vishnudas would say, "I am pleased by the shelter of these lotus feet." In this way Shri Gusainji showed grace to Vishnudas, and in this way he lived on the steps.

Prasang 2 – Answering the Scholars at the Door

Here and there, Brahmin scholars would come to debate with Shri Gusainji. Then Vishnudas said, "These scholars come to debate with Shri Gusainji; so I myself will reply to them and send them off, so that Shri Gusainji need not exert himself so much." Thinking this, whenever scholars came, he would debate with them and render them without answer. Then the scholars thought, "If one who is at the very steps has such ability that we have no reply, then how will we debate with Shri Gusainji?" Thinking this, all the Brahmins, after reaching the steps, would daily turn back.

Then one day Shri Gusainji said to the Vaishnavas, "Nowadays Brahmin scholars are not coming to debate. What is the reason for that?" Then the Vaishnavas said, "Maharaj! Many scholars do come, but on the steps Vishnudas debates with them and renders them

without answer, so they depart." Then Shri Gusainji called Vishnudas and said, "You indeed have such strength of Shri Acharyaji's grace. Therefore you have deep engagement with all the shastras, and you render scholars without reply. But from our doorway Brahmins are going away empty-handed; this is not good. Therefore allow the scholars to come to us. We will converse with them and send them off after giving them something." Then Vishnudas prostrated and said, "Maharaj! Now I will allow them to come. I was sending the scholars away only to prevent you from taking trouble. Now I will allow them to come." Thus such grace was upon Vishnudas.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): And in the scripture "Namratna," which Shri Raghunathji, the son of Shri Gusainji, composed, it is said: "vipra-dāridrya-dāvāgni." He who extinguishes the forest fire that is the misery of poverty of a Brahmin. Therefore, by proclaiming this name, Brahmins would be greatly satisfied and sent off with wealth and suchlike.

Prasang 3 – The Bhatt of Mathura and the Refusal of Food

There was a Bhatt of Mathura. He used to say daily to Shri Gusainji, "I will feed all your Vaishnavas one day." Then Shri Gusainji would say, "Do not be stubborn about this matter. How will we accept this?" But he did not agree and kept saying it daily. You heard it and kept silent. Bhatt was the father-in-law of Shri Gusainji. He invited Shri Gusainji. Then Shri Gusainji came to his house in Mathura for a meal. Then Shri Gusainji said to Vishnudas, "Bring the water-pot (jhari) and come with us." Then Vishnudas brought the water-pot and went with Shri Gusainji. Then after Shri Gusainji had eaten there at the Bhatt's place and got up, Vishnudas washed Shri Gusainji's hands and had him perform pure achaman.

Then Shri Gusainji said, "We are going to Shri Gokul. You take the maha-prasad from the plate, wash the plate, and then come." So Shri Gusainji went to Shri Gokul. Vishnudas, wiping with his own water and placing a leaf, transferred all the maha-prasad from the plate onto the leaf. Then he washed the plate and set it aside, and began to take the maha-prasad. Then Bhatt came to Vishnudas with food items and said, "Why are you eating this old food? I will place fine items; take these." Then Vishnudas said, "I do not need yours. If you place items in my leaf-plate, then my leaf-plate will be touched by you." Then Bhatt, becoming angry, went away. Vishnudas took the maha-prasad and came to Shri Gokul. He sat on his steps.

Afterwards that Bhatt came to Shri Gokul and said to Shri Gusainji, “Your sevak, a Shudra, spoke thus to me: ‘If you place items in my leaf-plate, then my plate will be touched.’” Then Shri Gusainji said, “You were saying that you would feed all our sevaks. If you could not feed even one sevak who is a Shudra, then how would you feed all the sevaks?” Then Bhatt, becoming ashamed, kept silent. Thus Vishnudas is a recipient of such grace and is devoted to Bhagavan. Therefore how far can one narrate his account?

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this account it is shown that nothing should be taken from the hand of the Bhatt. Because, at Bhatt's place there is the sankalpa-items of Shri Gusainji, therefore nothing should be taken. For this reason Shri Gusainji took Vishnudas, who is devoted to Bhagavan, there—because he is skilled in all dharmas and will not fail. If an ordinary Vaishnav were taken and he ate from the Bhatt’s hand, then his dharma would be lost. And further, as the understanding of Vaishnavas is limited, if they all begin to eat, then how will Vaishnav dharma grow? Therefore he took Vishnudas. So Vishnudas said, “My plate will be touched.” In this the nature of the Bhatt is indicated. Any item that the Bhatt touches should be understood as a touched (impure) thing. Here there is a great doubt: “He is an exalted Brahmin, a close relative of Shri Gusainji; Shri Gusainji takes from his hand. Then what fault is there for a Vaishnav?” Where this doubt is, it is said that the shastras speak of bodily relations and of relations of feeling (bhava).

Bodily-related are the Yadavas and the like of Kansa; and related by feeling are the devotees of Braj. The Yadavas also were considered by Shri Thakurji as a burden on the earth; therefore he destroyed them. And the devotees of Braj had a relation of feeling; therefore, under the sway of the love of the Braj devotees, he became bound. Although Shri Thakurji lived among the Yadavas, knowledge of the divine form did not arise in them; while in the Braj devotees, it arose from birth. Coming to the house of Nandaraya, everyone attained everything. In the same way, some know Bhatt as a relative of Shri Gusainji; some are even slanderers who keep an eye on taking money and suchlike. Therefore, how far should one speak? Consider them as possessed of demonic tendencies. And devotees have the mood of a das (servant). So the dharma of a das is to take the Lord’s remnants. Therefore, if one takes from Bhatt's hand, then his understanding will certainly be destroyed. And Shri Gusainji takes—he is Ishvara. Just as Shri Thakurji drank the forest fire, and yet it did not become so (for others). In the same way, Shri Gusainji takes for the sake of social dealings among kin. But a Vaishnav should not take. And just as if some low caste person fills Ganga water or Yamuna water in his own

vessel and brings it, a Vaishnav will not take it—so it is.

Maha-prasad is like the excellent Ganga water—just as water descends as pure drops from the sky. But due to the difference of vessels, in a shell it becomes a pearl, in bamboo it becomes the substance called bansalochan, and in the mouth of a serpent it becomes poison. Such differences occur. Therefore, whether they are Bhatts or those of other paths, one should never take from their hands. There someone may say, “The Bhatts perform seva after offering the name in dedication; what about taking it from their hands?” To this it is said: their dharma of Bhagavan is not touched at all. Why? Because they take the name in dedication from the child of Shri Gusainji and then practice kinship-mindedness. Then all dharma is destroyed. Where is their seva and where is their dedication?

If one has kinship-mindedness toward the Guru, he does not take remnants or charanamrit. Then a base dharma results. And if there is someone who takes remnants and charanamrit without kinship-mindedness and follows the Vaishnav way—even he, when taken later from another Bhatt’s hand, becomes the same as before. Therefore, the bhakti of Vaishnavas has been given by Shri Gusainji; there it remains. For this reason, through Vishnudas, all Vaishnavas were given instruction.

Varta 51 - Jeevandas Kshetri

Now, about Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Jeevandas Kshetri, who lived in Sinhanand, the feeling of his Varta is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Jeevandas is, in the Leela, a friend of Shri Yamunaji. Her name is "Ishwari." So he was born in the house of a Kshatriya in Sinhanand. He grew up to the age of about eighteen to twenty years. Then Jeevandas's father brought him from Sinhanand to Delhi. There he began to work as a broker. Jeevandas had a great passion and love for amusements and entertainments, so whatever he earned, he gave to prostitutes and bhavayya (performers) to watch dances. He ate from his father's earnings. When his father heard this, he became very angry with Jeevandas. He said, "You must not go to dances and shows today or hereafter."

Then Jeevandas said, "Now I will not go." After that, for him it was not possible to live without hearing and seeing amusements, so he went hiding it from his father. Then his father again heard of it. Then, becoming very angry with Jeevandas, he said, "You go from Delhi to Sinhanand. There is no work for you in the city." Then his father gave Jeevandas two rupees and said, "Stay for some days in Sinhanand in your house. Afterward, come to me." Then Jeevandas took the two rupees and set off for Sinhanand. On the way he thought, "I will not be able to live without amusements. And in Sinhanand everyone knows me, so there I cannot listen and watch. And my father has sent me home." Thinking this, he stood on the way.

So two hours passed while standing there. Meanwhile a bhavayya came along in company. He was going to Agra. Seeing that caravan, Jeevandas asked, "Who are you, from where have you come, where will you go?" Then they said, "We are bhavayya. We have come from the west; we will go to Agra." Then Jeevandas thought, "Agra is said to be a big city; let me see it. When I go home, what will I do?" So Jeevandas came to Agra with those bhavayya. In Agra, he did brokerage in cloth and did his food and drink there. Whatever surplus he earned, he spent to listen to amusements, and then returned. In this way he stayed for three years. His father then concluded, "My son was killed somewhere on the way, or he went out to some other country. A bad love of amusements causes harm so he has perished." Thinking

this, he sat weeping.

Here in Agra, at one time some thieves came wearing fine clothes. They said to Jeevandas, “We want to purchase very fine clothes.” So Jeevandas brought goods worth one hundred rupees from a cloth-merchant’s market. Then those thieves engaged him in talk, and evening fell. They said to Jeevandas, “In the morning, we will pay the price for what we keep. So you come at dawn.” Seeing the upper display of their wealth, jewelry, and clothes, Jeevandas understood that they were good men. So that night Jeevandas went to listen to amusements. Meanwhile, the thieves took away all the clothes. In the morning, when he came and looked, there was no one. People asked him like this; then the people said, “They were thieves. They have cleanly taken away the goods from four or five others too.”

Then Jeevandas went to that cloth-merchant and said, “Your goods have all gone like this.” Then that cloth-merchant sent Jeevandas to prison. So three days passed, without food or water. Then Jeevandas said to that cloth-merchant, “Now certainly my life will go. Therefore do one thing. My father does brokerage in Delhi; I will write to him. And my house is in Sinhanand; I will write there. So I will arrange your hundred rupees and pay them. Therefore take me to bathe in the Yamuna. Because, in our village, all the Vaishnavs, the sevaks of Shri Vallabhacharyaji, used to say among themselves that, by bathing in Yamunaji and by drinking her water, all sorrow departs. A new body is obtained. Therefore, Vaishnavs do not speak falsely. So if you let me bathe in Yamunaji, I will consider something for your rupees.”

Then compassion arose in that cloth-merchant’s mind, and he said, “We will bathe you at home with Yamuna water. So take food and drink.” Then Jeevandas said, “It is a great meritorious stream for bathing. So if you will let me bathe in Yamunaji, that is good. If not, I will not drink water now. My throat is drying; so my life will depart today or tomorrow. Then the blame of killing will fall on you.” Then that cloth-merchant sent four men, saying, “Tie this one’s hands and take him to bathe in the Yamuna. Lest he drown and die, hold him firmly.” Then the four men, binding his two hands, took him to the bank of Yamunaji and bathed Jeevandas. There Shri Acharyaji performed the Sandhyavandan. Ten or twenty Vaishnavs were singing. At that time Shri Acharyaji’s gaze fell upon Jeevandas.

Then seeing Jeevandas, Shri Acharyaji said, “Who is this? Four men are holding him with his hands bound. Bring him here.” Then all the Vaishnavs went and persuaded those four men. So the men holding Jeevandas came to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji said,

“Jeevandas, will you again watch and listen to amusements?” Then Jeevandas said, “Maharaj! I am suffering from the fruit of amusement. I did not heed what my father said, so I must undergo it (pargho).” Then Shri Acharyaji said to Krishnadas, “Arrange to get someone to pay these hundred rupees for Jeevandas. Write our name and bring him released.” Hearing this, ten or twenty Vaishnavs of the village submitted, “Maharaj! Why are you sending Krishnadas for such a small matter? We will get him released.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Quickly, get him released and bring him.”

Then the Vaishnavs, taking Jeevandas with them, said to that cloth-merchant, “Release Jeevandas; we will give you the hundred rupees.” (Afterward) giving the hundred rupees, they brought Jeevandas to Shri Acharyaji. Then offering prostrations to Shri Acharyaji, Jeevandas submitted, “Maharaj! From this extraordinary prison you have released me. So release me from this worldly prison also. And blessed is Shri Yamunaji, and blessed are your Vaishnavs. Once, in Sinhanand, for some household work, I had gone to the Vaishnavs. The Vaishnavs used to say among themselves that, by bathing in Yamunaji, all sorrow departs, and a new body is obtained. That is true, I say. I have just now bathed; this worldly sorrow has gone, and even the sorrow of the world will also depart by your grace. If you make me a sevak, then even a new body will be obtained. Therefore your Vaishnavs are blessed. The fruit of being in their company for a single moment is beyond measure.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Go and bathe in Shri Yamunaji and come.” Then Jeevandas bathed in Shri Yamunaji and came to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji bestowed the Name upon Jeevandas and gave him Brahma-sambandh. Afterward he said, “You come with us; we will take you and reach you to Sinhanand. If you stay here, then some bad company may attach to you and you will spoil again.” After that Shri Acharyaji went to a Vaishnav’s house; he had the cooking done and offered the bhog. Afterward he took the meal and gave the plate of jhoothan (leftovers from the offering) to Jeevandas at his house. Jeevandas took Mahaprasad on the fourth day; then his body became excellent. Afterward Shri Acharyaji, taking Jeevandas along like this from Agra, arrived at Thaneshwar. Then he sent a Vaishnav to Sinhanand and said, “At Jeevandas’s house, say that Jeevandas has come.”

Then Vaishnav went to Sinhanand and said to Jeevandas’s father, “Your son has come to Thaneshwar with Shri Acharyaji.” Then Jeevandas’s father, delighted, ran from Sinhanand and came; he met Jeevandas in Thaneshwar. Embracing him to his chest with tears, he

said, “Son, where had you gone? I thought you had died somewhere.” Then Jeevandas told the entire matter. “In this way Shri Acharyaji freed me from prison and took me along, showing grace. But now, you go and bring my wife and mother and everyone here. If you all become Shri Acharyaji’s sevaks, then I will come home. If not, then I will not live at home.” Then his father said, “I will bring everyone. Whatever you say, I will do.” Then Jeevandas’s father went to Sinhanand and brought everyone to Thaneshwar. He made a request to Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! You saved Jeevandas’s life. You have done us a great favor. We all are in your refuge. Kindly bestow the Name.” Then Shri Acharyaji bestowed the Name. Then Jeevandas submitted to Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! It would be good if everyone received Brahma-sambandh.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “They are not qualified for Brahma-sambandh. By the Name alone they will be uplifted.” Afterward Jeevandas said, “Maharaj! Now what is your command for me?”

Then Shri Acharyaji placed on Jeevandas’s head the prasadi garments of Shri Navneetpriyaji for seva and said, “Now live at home and do Bhagavad-seva.” Then Jeevandas, together with father, mother, and wife, offered prostrations to Shri Acharyaji, took leave, and came to Sinhanand. Then Jeevandas said before his mother and father, “Such compassionate Shri Acharyaji is he who paid the rupees and got me released from prison.” Then the mother and father said, “One must not keep a Guru’s debt on one’s head.” So they sold all the jewelry and clothes, and one hundred and ten rupees came. Then the father said to Jeevandas, “I will go and give all these rupees to Shri Acharyaji. It is not good to keep a Guru’s debt on one’s head.” Then Jeevandas took the one hundred and ten rupees and went and placed them before Shri Acharyaji.

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Why have you taken so much trouble over this? You are ours. We are pleased; therefore nothing would have been an obstacle for you.” Then Jeevandas said, “Maharaj! What worthiness do we have? Whatever favor you have done, each and every hair of the body is indebted to you. Wherever you sell us, there we will be sold. We are slaves without a price. We were suffering the hell that is this world. You have freed us.” Hearing this humble supplication, being very pleased, Shri Acharyaji said, “Jeevandas, now worldly sorrow and happiness will not hinder you at all. And whatever you hold in your mind, those desires of yours will all be fulfilled. Now go home and do Bhagavad-seva.” Then offering prostrations, Jeevandas came home. Afterward, Shri Acharyaji set out for circumambulation of the earth. So Jeevandas served with love. He did daily satsang with Vaishnavs with affectionate warmth. Then Shri Thakurji began to

show favor.

Prasang 1 – Rain Stops by Shri Acharyaji's Honor

So, at one time, the Vaishnavs of Sinhanand all together were coming to Aadel for the darshan of Shri Acharyaji. Among them was also Jeevandas. One day on the way, stopping at a stage of the journey, each one set up his own cooking place, and all the Vaishnavs were doing the cooking. At that time, rain clouds rose up. Clouds came from all sides. Drops began to fall. Then all the Vaishnavs said, "Rain has come; today it will be difficult to do the cooking." Then Jeevandas said to all the Vaishnavs, "Do not worry." Then, looking toward the clouds, Jeevandas said, "This is the honor (aan) of Shri Acharyaji—that now it does not rain." So the rain stopped. Afterward all the Vaishnavs finished the cooking, offered bhog to Shri Thakurji, took Mahaprasad, went to their resting places, and slept. Then Jeevandas said, "Now all other honors are released. When it comes into your mind to rain as much as you wish, then rain."

Then the Vaishnavs remained astonished, thinking, "There is divine potency in Jeevandas." Afterward, all the Vaishnavs came to Aadel, had darshan of Shri Acharyaji, and offered prostrations. Shri Acharyaji gave satisfaction to all. Then one Vaishnav said to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! One day on the way, while we were cooking, rain came; then Jeevandas invoked your honor (aan). Immediately the rain stopped." Then Shri Acharyaji said to Jeevandas, "You invoked my honor—if the rain had still fallen, then what would you have done?" Then Jeevandas said, "Maharaj! Who is there who, after your honor (aan) has been invoked, would still rain? By your glory, I would have thrown him to the earth along with Indra." Then Shri Acharyaji remained silent. Thus, with such firmness, Jeevandas is a recipient of grace and belongs to the Lord. How long can one tell his Varta?

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here a doubt may arise—that Jeevandas is indeed a recipient of the Lord's grace. Why did he not give his own honor (aan)? Why did he invoke Shri Acharyaji's? Here it is said that—even if Jeevandas had given his own honor, the rain would not have fallen. But Jeevandas did not wish to manifest his own greatness. Because from that, if one's greatness grows very much, then sometimes pride arises. That only brings ruin. Therefore Shri Acharyaji would be displeased—"You made Shri Thakurji exert effort in a trivial matter." Therefore, in his heart, Jeevandas knows love for the Path of Grace (Pushtimarg). Hence he showed the greatness of Shri Acharyaji to the Vaishnavs.

Varta 52 - Bhagwandas Saraswat

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Bhagwandas, a Saraswat Brahmin from Hajipur, his story's essence is told as follows.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the Divine Play, he is the sakhi (companion) of Shri Vishakhaji. In the leela, his name is "Sugandhini." He was born in the house of a Saraswat Brahmin in Hajipur. Once, he went to the house of a yajman (patron) in Patna and stayed there for a few days. At that time, Bhagwandas was seventeen years old. After serving that yajman diligently, when it was time to leave, the yajman began to give him a payment of a few coins.

Bhagwandas, filled with anger, said, "I do not want this! You are a wealthy man, and after keeping me so many days, you give me such little dakshina? I want nothing from you." Saying this, he left the money and went home. Before his father, he wept and said, "Why have such Brahmin masters done this to me? For the sake of a few coins, royal people serve others and look at their faces in greed; this must be the result of great sin."

Then his father said, "I am going abroad; I will earn and bring money from the east." Bhagwandas replied, "You are old; do not go. I will go instead." So Bhagwandas set out ahead toward Patna. Meanwhile, Shri Acharyaji was traveling from Kashi toward Purushottam Kshetra (Puri). On the way, Bhagwandas met him and had his darshan. Bhagwandas said, "Good! I am blessed to have the company of a learned Brahmin like you on my path."

Shri Acharyaji spoke with the Vaishnavas along the way about various topics, and Bhagwandas kept listening as they walked. When they halted at a resting place, Shri Acharyaji said to Bhagwandas, "Go to Krishnadas and take what you need from him." Then Shri Acharyaji told Krishnadas, "After taking what you need for your daily offerings, give the remaining items to the Brahmin who asks for them."

So Krishnadas took Bhagwandas along, gathered his own necessary items, and said, "Whatever you need, take it." Bhagwandas said, "A sher of sugar, a sher of ghee, and two shers of flour." Out of greed, he took food supplies for two or three days. He used a little and kept the rest aside.

In this manner, for three days he kept asking, and Krishnadas kept giving. On the fourth day, Bhagwandas said to Krishnadas, “Please tell me some task I can do, shall I bring water, or wash the vessels?” Krishnadas replied, “You are not Shri Acharyaji’s sevak, so water carried by your hands cannot be used. Nor can you touch the cooking vessels.”

Then Bhagwandas went to Shri Acharyaji and asked, “Maharaj! The water is brought by Shudras, and they wash the vessels. I am a Brahmin, why don’t you have me do this?” Shri Acharyaji said, “In our belief, one who does not know Bhagwan is as fallen as a Shudra. And one who truly knows Bhagwan is the highest Brahmin. This is the only distinction. Therefore, we do not assign such tasks according to caste.”

Bhagwandas then said, “Maharaj, how can one know whether a Vaishnav knows Bhagwan?” Shri Acharyaji replied, “When Shri Thakurji bestows His grace, only then can He be truly known.” Bhagwandas asked, “How does that grace happen?” Shri Acharyaji said, “When the Guru is pleased, then know that Shri Thakurji is also pleased.” Bhagwandas said, “But I have no Guru. Please accept me as your sevak.” Shri Acharyaji said, “Becoming a sevak is very difficult. You, as a Brahmin, consider yourself great. A sevak must become humble like a das (servant). Therefore, do not become a sevak lightly.”

Bhagwandas replied, “Then I will become a das now. I have long lived proudly as a master and found only sorrow in it. Now, please accept me as your sevak.” Then Shri Acharyaji gave him a name, instructed him to fetch water, wash the vessels, and prepare the cooking area. Later, Bhagwandas held the used plates of Mahaprasad and took the remnants as prasad himself. His mind changed, and he realized, “I greedily took food from Krishnadas for three days; that was very wrong.” Later, he took the five rupees he had tied in his cloth and offered them to Shri Acharyaji, saying humbly, “Maharaj! I acted wrongly by taking the food out of greed. But I was ignorant and did not recognize your true form. Please forgive my offense. You are the Lord Himself. Now please initiate me with Brahma Sambandh.”

Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, “Tomorrow I will have you do samarpan (offering of self). Keep these five rupees with you, they will be useful for your expenses.” Bhagwandas pleaded, “Maharaj! I have already offered them as your gift. How can I keep them now?” So Shri Acharyaji accepted them. The next day, he gave Bhagwandas Brahma Sambandh initiation. Afterward, Bhagwandas stayed with Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu for one year, serving him faithfully.

During the summer, he made large leaf shelters along the road to provide shade. Wherever Shri Acharyaji stayed, he would clean the ground, lay down soft bedding, and help in the kitchen preparations. Seeing this, Shri Acharyaji became pleased and gave him the seva (service) of his own footwear. He said, “Serve these well. Now you may go home.” Bhagwandas said, “When you come to my home, please give shelter to my whole family.” Shri Acharyaji replied, “Your family members are not divine souls; they will not attain shelter. You alone will perform the seva.”

Then Bhagwandas bowed down, made his humble request, took leave, and returned to his village Hajipur. There, he prepared a special place in his home and began serving Shri Thakurji with great devotion. After some time, Shri Thakurji began to reveal His grace and affection to Bhagwandas.

Prasang 1 – Shri Acharyaji Visits Bhagwandas’ Home

After some days, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came to Bhagwandas’s home. Bhagwandas prepared food offerings, and Shri Acharyaji accepted the meal. Bhagwandas held the used plate of prasad. Shri Acharyaji gave names (initiation names) to Bhagwandas’s parents and his wife. Then he went to Adhel.

At the place where Shri Acharyaji resided there, Bhagwandas built a raised platform (chauri) and cleaned it daily. Every morning, after bathing, he would bow down there, thinking with full faith, “Here, Shri Acharyaji himself resides.” Shri Acharyaji would appear to him, give him darshan, and converse with him. Thus, Bhagwandas became a recipient of Shri Acharyaji’s great grace. This much is told of his story.

Varta 53 - Bhagwandas Sanchora

Now, the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Bhagwandas Sanchora Brahmin, is being told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play (Leela), Bhagwandas is one of Lalitaji's companions. His name in the Leela is Sundari. Near Rajnagar in Gujarat, there is a village where he was born in the house of a Sanchora Brahmin. When he was about eight years old, he began going to a scholar in Rajnagar to study. By the age of ten, he had gained knowledge.

One day, that scholar went to have the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji, and Bhagwandas went along with him. At that time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu had also arrived there. The scholar went to debate with Shri Acharyaji, but he was defeated. Feeling humiliated, he returned to his lodging. Later, he said to Bhagwandas, "I will go to Kashi, study more, and then come back to debate again with Shri Acharyaji. You should come with me."

Bhagwandas replied, "I have come for the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. I came just yesterday, how can I leave today? Let me stay for a month for darshan." The scholar said, "I am leaving now; we will meet again." And so the scholar went to Kashi. Then Bhagwandas came to Shri Acharyaji, bowed down, and humbly said, "Maharaj! That scholar was defeated in the debate and has gone to Kashi in shame. I was his student will you please teach me now?"

Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "What will you do by studying too much?" Bhagwandas replied, "Maharaj! If I study a lot, I will earn a lot of wealth. I will be respected among scholars everywhere. Whenever there is a discussion of scriptures, I will be able to debate. People will honor me in the world."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "There are two results of studying scriptures. When one studies, one reads and understands the scriptures. The scriptures are like cool water and like beautiful inner eyes through them, all knowledge is revealed. But this is for those who are truly saintly and pure. Like cool water, such people's hearts become calm; they understand that happiness and sorrow are the will of God. They see God in every living being. Such people become humble, content, pure, and free from anger and other faults. They take refuge in God,

and then their learning bears fruit. They attain happiness both in this world and the next.

But if an unworthy person studies, that knowledge becomes like fire for him. Already burning with lust, anger, pride, and jealousy, his arrogance increases even more with learning. Such a person is not respected in the world. Day and night, he burns in the fire of ego. Such a soul remains unhappy in this life and attains hell in the next. Therefore, do not study too many scriptures. Whatever you learn is enough. Wealth and fortune come according to one's destiny. Great scholars serve foolish kings. So, maintain contentment and compassion. Give up lust, anger, greed, and delusion, and do the bhajan of Shri Thakurji. Your livelihood is already arranged by God, by His will, you will receive what is meant for you.

Hearing this divine and philosophical teaching from Shri Acharyaji, Bhagwandas's heart became filled with devotion to God. He bowed down and said humbly, "Maharaj! All my doubts have vanished. I now know that the bhajan of God is supreme among all. Please be merciful and grant me refuge. I will do bhajan exactly as you instruct."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Go and bathe, then come back." Bhagwandas bathed and returned. Shri Acharyaji then gave him initiation by name and taught him how to offer his devotion. Bhagwandas said, "Maharaj! My heart longs to stay near you and serve you."

Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "You cannot stay with me. Many faults arise in living beings, and if ever I become displeased, it might obstruct your spiritual progress. These Vaishnavas here understand my nature well and are fit to stay with me. Therefore, you should return home. Spend some time in the company of Vaishnavas. Later, Shri Govardhannathji will manifest on Mount Govardhan. You should go there and serve under the command of Shri Gusainji. He will fulfill all your desires."

Then Shri Acharyaji gave him the Brahmasambandh mantra and the eight syllable mantra written down. He said, "Prepare food, offer it to the Lord, and live your life with that." Bhagwandas requested, "Maharaj! As long as you remain here, let me serve you." Shri Acharyaji said, "Do it happily." So Bhagwandas would fetch water and prepare all arrangements for the kitchen. When Shri Acharyaji would deliver discourses, Bhagwandas stood behind him, fanning him with the chavar (fly-whisk).

Shri Acharyaji was very pleased with Bhagwandas and taught him the "Chatushloki" that he himself had composed. He said, "Earlier, your mind was inclined only toward learning, but now you will naturally understand the meanings of the Vedas, Puranas, and Bhagavatam. I am pleased with you. Now return home." Bhagwandas bowed and went home.

Later, Shri Acharyaji went on parikrama. Bhagwandas stayed home for many days. Some time later, his wife passed away. Bhagwandas felt at peace, thinking, "Now the bonds of household life are gone. I will go to Braj."

After some time, he heard from Vaishnavas that Shri Govardhandhar (Shri Nathji) had manifested on Mount Giriraj, and Shri Gusainji was doing seva and adornment there. Bhagwandas sold all his possessions and gave them to a Brahmin relative, as he had no parents or close family left. Then he departed and reached Giriraj after some days. He had darshan of Shri Nathji and then of Shri Gusainji.

He bowed down and humbly said, "Maharaj! Shri Acharyaji had given me refuge and told me that when Shri Gusainji receives me, I should serve under his guidance. So I have come to you. I have no worldly ties left. Please bless me and assign me seva."

Shri Gusainji, pleased, said, "You belong to Shri Nathji's inner circle. Perform the seva of Balbhog (midday offering)." Bhagwandas began preparing beautiful ingredients for the offerings.

Prasang 1 – Bhagwandas Makes a Mistake in Seva

One day, Bhagwandas prepared the materials for the bhog, but the bhog got burnt. Yet he still offered it as bhog. When Shri Gusainji came to offer it to the Lord, he saw the burnt food and became very upset with Bhagwandas. He removed him from seva. Bhagwandas sat in a corner and began to weep, saying, "What shall I do now?"

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Gusainji became upset because Bhagwandas had offered spoiled food. If it had gone bad, he should have made it again. Why offer spoiled food to the Lord? This showed carelessness. If he had told me, I would have had it prepared again. Or he could have asked the inner sevaks to do it. Thinking thus, Shri Gusainji became angry with him. Afterward, Bhagwandas went to Govind Kund and met Achyutdas. He told him everything, saying, "Now what should I do? I have been removed from seva."

Achyutdas said, “Prepare the ingredients carefully next time. Do not worry. Shri Gusainji is very merciful. He will give you seva again. Go sit at Govind Kund.” Every day, Shri Gusainji would come to Govind Kund at noon to perform sandhya (ritual prayers). Achyutdas was elderly and always absorbed in mental seva. Shri Gusainji would come daily to see him. One day, after performing sandhya at Govind Kund, Shri Gusainji came to Achyutdas and saw tears flowing from his eyes. Seeing this, Shri Gusainji asked, “Why are you so sad?”

Achyutdas replied, “Maharaj! Shri Acharyaji entrusted all living souls to your care. You are to accept and uplift them. Souls are full of faults. If you begin to look only at their faults, how will they ever be uplifted?

“When Shri Govardhannathji gave the command to Shri Acharyaji to give Brahmasambandh, He said that all faults of the one who receives it will be removed. But now, if you begin to see their faults, how will souls attain liberation? That is why I am deeply saddened.”

Shri Gusainji said, “Do not worry. I have already instructed Bhagwandas, and through you, Shri Acharyaji has spoken to me. Henceforth, I will never be displeased with any Vaishnav.” Then Achyutdas was content. After that, Shri Gusainji went to Govind Kund, took Bhagwandas by the hand, and brought him into Shri Nathji’s temple. He said, “Do your seva and prepare the offerings carefully.” Bhagwandas was overjoyed and sang this kirtan:

श्री वट्ठलेश चरन कमल पावन त्रैलोक्य करन दरस परस सुन्दर वर वार वार वंदे। समरथ ग ररराज धरन लीला नज

प्रगट करन संतन हत मानुष तन वृन्दावन चन्दे ॥१॥

Shri Vithalesh’s lotus feet purify all three worlds; their sight and touch are beautiful and

sacred, again and again I bow to them. He who holds up Mount Giriraj and reveals divine

play for the sake of saints, whose human form in Vrindavan is most charming,glory to

Him! (1)

चरणोदक लेत प्रेत ततछन तें मुक्त भये करुणामय नाथ सदा आनंद न ध कन्दे। वारने

'भगवानदास' वहरत सदा

र सक रास जै जै जस बो ल बो ल गावत श्रु त छन्दे ॥२॥

Taking the water from His feet, even ghosts are instantly liberated. O merciful Lord,

ocean of bliss, I ever sing Thy praise! Bhagwandas sings and rejoices, chanting the name

‘Jai Jai Jas’ in melodious rhythm. (2)”

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Hearing this kirtan, Shri Gusainji was pleased. From then on, Bhagwandas engaged in seva with great devotion and care. Soon, Shri Nathji began to show him divine grace. Thus, Bhagwandas became one of the blessed devotees upon whom Shri Acharyaji’s grace was fully bestowed. This is where Bhagwandas’s story concludes.

Varta 54 - Achyutdas Sanodhya Brahmin

Now, the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu’s sevak, Achyutdas Sanodhya Brahmin from Mathura, the meaning of his story is told here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play (Leela), this Achyutdas is the companion (sakhi) of Lalitaji. In the Leela, her name is “Madhura.” She speaks in such a sweet manner that it feels as if nectar is flowing from her words. Everyone loves her.

Achyutdas was born in the home of a Sanodhya Brahmin in Mathura. When he was about nine years old, he came with his parents during the Diwali festival to perform the circumambulation (parikrama) of Shri Govardhan. When Achyutdas saw the beauty of Shri Giriraj, his heart became deeply attached. He then said to his parents, “I wish to live here at Shri Govardhan.”

His father asked, “My son, do you desire to become a renunciant (vairagi)?” Achyutdas replied, “I am already a renunciant. My marriage has not taken place at all. But I have some relatives in Anyor village; I will stay there for a few days. After performing ten or twenty

circumambulations of Shri Govardhan, when my heart feels satisfied, I will return." Then his parents entrusted him to the care of their relatives and returned to Mathura.

Prasang 1 – Achyutdas' Devotion at Govardhan

Achyutdas stayed in Anyor. Sometimes he stayed at Parasoli, sometimes at Shri Kund, and sometimes at Shri Govardhan, thus he lived in various places around the hill. Later, Shri Acharyaji came to the area around Shri Govardhan. At Anyor, he established seva at the house of Sadhu Pandey and revealed the form of Shri Govardhandhar (Krishna who lifted the Govardhan hill) outside the mountain.

Then, through divine inspiration, Achyutdas' soul was moved, and he offered his name and devotion. He was told, "You should perform the seva of Shri Govardhandhar." Achyutdas bowed to Shri Acharyaji and humbly requested, "Maharaj! Please bestow such grace upon me that my mind may become absorbed in solitary mental (manasi) seva."

Then Shri Acharyaji gave him his charanamrit (the sanctified water that has washed his feet). Achyutdas drank it, touched it to his hands and eyes, placed it on his forehead, and applied it upon his heart. At that moment, Achyutdas' eyes became divine. He began to have darshan of the Leelas (divine pastimes). He placed the charanamrit upon his head.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Just as in the path of devotion by maryada (rules and discipline), Lord Mahadev became the foremost among devotees by holding the Ganga upon his head, in the same way Achyutdas held the charanamrit of Shri Acharyaji upon his head and ever remained in its grace. By applying it to his heart, all the principles of the divine Leelas and the truths of the path became firmly established within him. Then Shri Acharyaji taught him Siddhant Muktavali. Achyutdas became deeply absorbed in his mental seva.

He always lived in a cave near Govindakund. His eyes were filled with the nectar of divine love. Shri Gusainji would visit daily to give him darshan, outwardly to maintain the decorum of the maryada (path of discipline), but in truth, he would come for darshan of Achyutdas. For in Achyutdas' eyes, Shri Mahaprabhuji's form would manifest. Because

of this, when Shri Gusainji discussed the sentiments of the Govardhandhar Leelas with him, he felt immense joy.

Achyutdas was a realized soul (paramarthi). When Shri Gusainji once removed Bhagwandas from seva, he later, upon Achyutdas' humble request, accepted Bhagwandas back into the seva. Whatever offerings Shri Gusainji would prepare for Shri Govardhandhar, Achyutdas, sitting at Govindakund, would experience everything inwardly. He would tell Shri Gusainji, "Today, this offering is especially beautiful."

Thus, Achyutdas was accepted as a true devotee. Shri Gusainji would daily bring the Rajbhog offering to him and visit him regularly. However, the story of Achyutdas is not widely known, because his devotion was of the highest divine intimacy (viprayog). Stories related to such deep rasa (divine sentiments) are not revealed publicly. Therefore, his story is not elaborately described. Achyutdas was such a blessed devotee of the Lord, his story can only be told up to this point.

Varta 55 - Achyutdas Gaur Brahmin

Now, the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Achyutdas Gaur Brahmin, resident of Mahavan, is being narrated.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play (Leela), this Achyutdas is one of the close companions of Shri Vishakhaji, belonging to the inner circle of sakhis. His divine attainment happened there. In the Leela, his name is "Mohini." When he beholds Shri Thakurji, he becomes completely enchanted and forgets all awareness of his body.

He was born in the home of a Gaur Brahmin in Mahavan. When Shri Acharyaji once visited the house of Narayandas Brahmachari, he gave the name "Achyutdas" to this child. At that time, Achyutdas was around seven or eight years old. He often visited and spent time with Narayandas Brahmachari.

When Achyutdas turned twenty years old, he asked Narayandas, "You once told me that Shri Acharyaji gave me a name and accepted me as his sevak. Where is he now? What is his name?" He continued, "At that time, I was just a child and did not understand anything. Now, I wish to see him and offer myself to him." Narayandas replied, "Shri Acharyaji's name is Shri Vallabhacharya, and he is currently residing in the village of Adel near the sacred Tirthraj Prayag."

Then Achyutdas said, "I will go to Adel after performing the parikrama (circumambulation) of Giriraj Govardhan." Achyutdas had immense love for Girirajji's parikrama. Every month he performed two or four parikramas. So he set out for Adel after completing one parikrama, and after a few days, he reached there.

He bowed down to Shri Acharyaji and stood before him. Shri Acharyaji asked, "Achyutdas, from where have you come?" Achyutdas replied, "Maharaj, I have come from Braj." Shri Acharyaji then asked, "What do you do in Braj?" Achyutdas said, "Every month I perform two or four parikramas of Giriraj. I also associate with your Vaishnav, Narayandas Brahmachari of Mahavan. When I was a child, he told me that you had given me my name. At that time, I did not know you. Narayandas has now told me everything in detail. Please grant me initiation and accept my complete surrender."

Shri Acharyaji said, “Go and take a bath in Shri Yamunaji and then come back.” Achyutdas bathed in Shri Yamunaji and returned to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji initiated him, giving him his name and performing the Brahmasambandh ceremony. Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji said to him, “You have done many parikramas of Giriraj, but have you ever seen any divine miracle?”

Achyutdas replied, “Maharaj, I have not seen any miracle.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “When you perform three continuous parikramas of Giriraj without stopping, you will see something.” Achyutdas bowed to Shri Acharyaji, took his leave, and departed. He eagerly awaited the day when he could go to Shri Govardhan and perform three consecutive parikramas as instructed. After a few days, he went to Narayandas and told him everything in detail: “Shri Acharyaji graciously gave me Brahmasambandh and ordered me to perform three continuous parikramas of Shri Govardhan. So I am going there now.”

He reached Shri Govardhan and rested for the night. In the last quarter of the night, he awoke, performed his bodily duties, bathed mentally in the Manasi Ganga, and began the parikrama. He completed the first parikrama by the middle of the next day. Then he began the second one, which he finished after about six hours on the following day. Starting the third parikrama, when he reached near Apsarakund, he became completely exhausted, hungry and weak. It was around midnight.

At that time, a cowherd boy approached him and said, “O Vairagi (renunciate), where are you going? There is a lion sitting ahead. Go back.” Achyutdas replied, “How can I go back? Shri Acharyaji has commanded me to complete three continuous parikramas. I will not turn back.” Then the cowherd boy disappeared. Achyutdas continued walking forward and saw a lion standing in the middle of the path. He thought to himself, “I cannot leave the parikrama incomplete. If the lion eats me, let him eat me.”

Gathering courage, he walked toward the lion. But as he neared, he saw instead a beautiful cow standing there. He circumambulated the cow, placed its tail on his head in reverence, and continued his journey.

After completing the third parikrama by the next night, he returned to Mahavan and told Narayandas everything: “I saw a cowherd boy, then a lion, and finally a cow. What could be the meaning of all this?” Narayandas replied, “Only Shri Acharyaji knows the true meaning of

this." So Achyutdas went again to Adel after a few days to see Shri Acharyaji.

Shri Acharyaji asked him, "Did you perform the three continuous parikramas of Giriraj? Did you see anything?" Achyutdas replied, "Yes, Maharaj. I saw a cowherd boy, then a lion, and finally the vision of a cow. But I do not understand their significance."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "The cowherd boy was Shri Thakurji himself. He first came to test your patience and courage. The lion was Girirajji himself. When you approached with steadfastness, Girirajji appeared to you in the form of a cow. You are indeed very fortunate. However, your spiritual state is still immature, and true love (prem) has not yet awakened in you. That is why you did not experience the complete Leela vision."

After hearing this, Achyutdas bowed to Shri Acharyaji and humbly prayed, "Maharaj, please grant me the gift of divine love by your grace. Teach me the way by which I can experience the divine Leela." Shri Acharyaji replied, "When you engage in sincere Bhagavad-seva, divine love will awaken within you." Achyutdas said, "Maharaj, please give me the Thakurji for seva, and tell me how to serve. I will do exactly as you instruct."

Shri Acharyaji said, "We are now going to Braj. Come with us. There, all your desires will be fulfilled." So Achyutdas accompanied Shri Acharyaji. After traveling five stages from Adel, they arrived at a small village. Near the village was a beautiful pond surrounded by a dense garden. Seeing the lovely place, Shri Acharyaji said, "Today we will prepare the bhog (meal offerings) here."

He told Achyutdas, "Go, bathe and bring water." Achyutdas went to the pond, bathed, and as he came out, he saw a small peepal tree near the bank. Under the tree, on the green grass, was a beautiful form of Shri Thakurji seated. Achyutdas quickly ran to Shri Acharyaji and said, "Maharaj! At the edge of the pond, beneath a small peepal tree, on the green grass, I saw the divine form of Shri Thakurji."

Shri Acharyaji came there, cleaned the dust from the place with his own upper cloth, and handed that cloth to Achyutdas. He said, "Prepare the food and offer bhog to this Thakurji. Then, when we reach Braj, we will install Him at your house." Seeing the beautiful form of Thakurji, Achyutdas became filled with joy. The form had already been sanctified by Shri Acharyaji's own touch. Achyutdas cooked the food and offered bhog to Thakurji.

From then on, Achyutdas continued to serve Thakurji daily in this way. When they reached Mahavan, Achyutdas welcomed Shri Acharyaji into his home. Shri Acharyaji gave Thakurji a Panchamrit bath and seated Him on a sacred platform, giving Him the name “Shri Madan Mohanji.” He installed Him on Achyutdas’s head as his deity for worship. Shri Acharyaji stayed at Achyutdas’s home for three days, teaching him all the customs and practices of the Pushtimarg. Afterwards, he spent one night at the house of Narayandas Brahmachari, and from there, he went to Dwarka via Giriraj.

Prasang 1 – The Divine Vision and Service of Achyutdas

Achyutdas continued serving Shri Madan Mohanji with great devotion and care. After some time, Shri Madan Mohanji began to express His affection toward Achyutdas, allowing him to experience the sweetness of divine Leela. They conversed together, and whatever Achyutdas desired, Thakurji granted.

Later, when Achyutdas visited Shri Gusainji, Shri Gusainji would not allow him to bow down. He said, “In your heart resides Shri Acharyaji himself.” Such was Achyutdas, truly Bhagavadiya (belonging wholly to God). For many years, he lovingly performed the seva of Shri Madan Mohanji with deep concentration.

Afterwards, when Shri Acharyaji enacted his Asur Vyamoha Leela (divine withdrawal from the world), Achyutdas installed Shri Madan Mohanji in his home temple. Overcome with unbearable separation, he went to Badrikashram, gave up food and water, and left his body.

There he attained entry into the inner circle of Leela and merged into the divine mouth of Shri Thakurji himself. Later, Shri Madan Mohanji was placed in the care of Shri Gopinathji. Thus was Achyutdas, a most beloved and grace-filled sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, who could not bear separation from his Guru. Hence, the story of Achyutdas concludes here.

Varta 56 - Achyutdas Saraswat Brahmin

Now, we tell the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Achyutdas Saraswat Brahmin, who lived in Kada.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine Leela, he is one of Shri Yamunaji's sakhis, named "Rasatmika." She always remains absorbed in the bliss of union (samyog).

Achyutdas took birth in the home of a Saraswat Brahmin in Kada. When he was eleven years old, he got married. After four years, his wife passed away. Achyutdas was deeply saddened by her death. For four days, he did not eat anything. His sorrow was immense. His parents tried many times to console him, but he did not listen. He said, "I will take up renunciation." Then his father said, "If you wish, I will get you married twice." Saying this, his father tried to console him and fed him food. Ten days later, his father passed away. Achyutdas became even more sorrowful. Four days after that, his mother also passed away.

Then Achyutdas left his home and went on a pilgrimage, first to Badrinath and then to Jagannath Rai. There, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu had also arrived and was narrating the divine stories. Achyutdas sat and listened, but due to the weight of his sorrow, he could not comprehend anything. After finishing the discourse, Shri Acharyaji said, "Achyutdas, why are you so sad?" Then Achyutdas began to weep and said, "Maharaj! There is no limit to my grief." Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "If you tell me about your sorrow, I will find a remedy for it."

Then Achyutdas said, "Maharaj! My wife, mother, and father have all passed away. I have never experienced such suffering before, so I do not know what to do or how to overcome it." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Go, take a bath and come back. Shri Thakurji will remove all your sorrow." Achyutdas took a bath and returned. Then Shri Acharyaji initiated him by giving him the Name and having him make his formal offering (nivedan). Afterwards, reading the Vedic mantras, he sprinkled a handful of sanctified water.

At that moment, Achyutdas's heart became filled with wisdom,

patience, and firm refuge in Bhagwan. Then Achyutdas bowed to Shri Acharyaji and said, “Maharaj! I suffered so much for no reason. Who is wife, who is mother or father? Even this body is not mine, so why did I grieve over the relatives of the body? I am a sevak of Bhagwan, yet I forgot Him, that is why I suffered. Now that I have taken shelter in You, I have attained supreme happiness. Please instruct me in my service, and I shall do it.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Stay with me. Do whatever service is possible for you.”

So Achyutdas remained with Shri Acharyaji and served him with full dedication of body and mind during one of his pilgrimages around the holy land. When Shri Acharyaji was pleased and arrived at Adel, he said to Achyutdas, “Now go home and serve.” Tears filled Achyutdas’s eyes. He said, “Maharaj! Without hearing Your nectar-like words and without seeing You, I will not be able to live even a single day. You have removed all my worldly sorrow. If You send me away, who else has the power to remove this pain?”

Then Shri Acharyaji, pleased with him, gave him the seva (service) of His Padukas and said, “I am very pleased with you. Wherever you stay, I will appear to you and give you darshan. Whenever you have a doubt, ask me, I will remove it. Therefore, now go home and perform Bhagavad-seva.” Achyutdas bowed to Shri Acharyaji, placed His Padukas upon his head, and returned home to Kada.

Prasang 1 – Daily Darshan of Shri Acharyaji

Achyutdas devotedly served the Padukas of Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu used to give him daily darshan and speak with him. He taught him the principles of the Pushti Path and the inner sentiments of divine Leela. Achyutdas was thus deeply devoted and a true recipient of divine grace.

After some time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu accepted Sannyas and went to Kashi. He remained in that state for about one and a half months and then performed His divine Leela of Asur-Vyamoh (the illusionary departure from the world). At that time, there was a Vaishnav with Him who became extremely sorrowful in separation. Before performing this Leela, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu had told that Vaishnav, “Go to Kada to Achyutdas. He will remove all your sorrow and doubts.”

When Shri Acharyaji performed His Asur-Vyamoh Leela in Kashi, the Vaishnav, filled with grief, went to Kada and met Achyutdas. He told him about Shri Acharyaji taking Sannyas and the Asur-Vyamoh Leela.

Then Achyutdas said, “Shri Acharyaji could never do such a thing. You must be deluded. Mahaprabhuji would never perform such an act. You are mistaken.” The Vaishnav replied, “I was in Kashi with Shri Acharyaji. I saw it with my own eyes.”

Achyutdas said, “The time of His divine reappearance will be within two ghadi (about 48 minutes). Then your doubt will be removed.” The Vaishnav waited. After that time passed, Achyutdas took a bath, opened the temple doors, and called the Vaishnav inside to have darshan. The Vaishnav saw Shri Acharyaji seated, looking into the scriptures. He immediately bowed down and stood with folded hands. Then Shri Acharyaji said to him, “Do not doubt after seeing My worldly Leela in Kashi. I always dwell in the homes of My devotees. Now I am not visible to worldly people, but to My Bhagwadiya (devoted souls), I give daily darshan.” The Vaishnav’s doubts were dispelled.

Achyutdas always remained absorbed in the bliss of union (samyog-rasa). He was a true Bhagwadiya and a beloved recipient of Shri Acharyaji’s grace. Thus, this is the account of his life and devotion.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): He is a sakhi of Shri Yamunaji, and therefore, his experiences related to the Leelas of divine union are numerous and cannot all be described openly.

Varta 57 - Narayandas Kayasth

Now, we tell the account of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Narayandas Kayasth, resident of Ambalaya, and present the sentiment of his story.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine Leela, he is the sakhi of Kumarika. In the Leela, his name is "Braj Vilasani."

In Ambalaya, he was born in the home of a Kayasth. When Narayandas grew older, becoming twenty years of age, Narayandas, too, used to go with his father. His father worked for the lord of that region. Narayandas had a strong addiction to gambling. His father beat him a lot and explained things to him, but he could not remain without gambling. One day, while gambling, Narayandas lost one thousand rupees. People came to his father to demand the money. They said, "Narayandas has lost in gambling; those people have surrounded him; you should pay." Then Narayandas's father said, "That same Narayandas will give it." There was a big quarrel. Afterwards, Narayandas's father gave one thousand rupees, and, after speaking to the regional lord, had Narayandas expelled from the region.

Narayandas went to the southern region. There he stayed with a Brahmin and studied some learning. He began to read scriptures, and his addiction to gambling left him. Afterwards, he taught ten or five children and made a livelihood from that. One day, in the market at a weekly bazaar, he was teaching children. One child made some mistake, so he was beating him.

Krishnadas had come to the market to buy provisions for Shri Acharyaji. Seeing Narayandas as a divine soul, Krishnadas said, "Narayandas! Do not beat such children; have compassion." Then Narayandas said, "You go to your own work; what business is this of yours? This is indeed my work." Then Krishnadas said, "If you beat in this manner, you fled Ambalaya because of gambling; now, if any child dies, it will be counted as murder, and then where will you flee now?" Then Narayandas said, "How do you know about Ambalaya? You have never seen me." Then Krishnadas said, "By the grace of Shri Acharyaji I know everything about you. I have indeed not seen you, but you are an excellent divine soul; therefore I am speaking to you. Leave this livelihood of teaching children." Then Narayandas said,

“Where will I eat from?” Then Krishnadas said, “You are a Kayasth; do someone’s employment and earn your food.” Then Narayandas said, “If I do what you say now, I will get into trouble; this is suitable for me.” Then Krishnadas said, “You know; you will suffer.” Saying this, Krishnadas took the provisions and came to Shri Acharyaji and told him everything: “Maharaj! Narayandas Kayasth from Ambalaya is here. He is a divine soul. I tried to explain to him, but he did not agree. He is teaching children.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “So what if he did not agree? You have explained to him. He will come looking for you even now.”

After that, Shri Acharyaji prepared the cooking, offered the bhog, ate, and laid down in a garden outside the village. In the third quarter of the day, Narayandas struck a child on the writing board. That child fell down unconscious. Then Narayandas, frightened, took the child into a room, rubbed his nose and mouth many times, but the child did not wake up. Then Narayandas remembered that the words of that great person had come true within two quarters of the day. Therefore he thought, “Since he said, ‘I know by the grace of Shri Acharyaji,’ he must be with Shri Acharyaji.” Then, bolting the room, he went asking everyone in the village, “Has Shri Acharyaji come to this region?” Then a learned Brahmin said, “Shri Acharyaji has arrived; he has refuted Mayavada and established the path of devotion. He has stopped in a garden outside the village.” Hearing this, Narayandas ran. He came to the gate of that garden. Seeing Krishnadas, Narayandas said, “What you said has all come true. I struck that child again, and he became unconscious.” Saying this, he fell at Krishnadas’s feet and began to weep, and said, “Please forgive my offense. I did not heed your words.” Then Krishnadas said, “Do not weep. Now have darshan of Shri Acharyaji; by his grace, everything will become well.” Then Narayandas said, “I do not know Shri Acharyaji. Please show me mercy and take me.” Then Krishnadas brought Narayandas. Shri Acharyaji was lying down.

Then Narayandas offered obeisance and made a humble plea: “Maharaj! I did not heed what he told me, and thus I suffered. Now I have come into your refuge. Remove the stain from my head. The child of that householder has become unconscious. I have locked the room and put up a bolt and come.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “That child will become well, but afterwards will you again do the same work?” Then Narayandas said, “Maharaj! I will become your sevak, your servant, and stay with you. Whatever command you give, that I will do.” Then Shri Acharyaji, taking water from a small strainer, read Vedic mantras and gave it in a leaf-cup, and said, “Sprinkle this water over the child; the child will arise.” Then Narayandas took the water,

opened the bolt of the room, and sprinkled it over the child who was lying unconscious. The child arose. After that, sending the child home, he came to Shri Acharyaji, offered obeisance, and made a plea: “Maharaj! I am in your refuge; make me a sevak. From my head, you have removed the charge of murder.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Go, bathe and come.” Then Narayan bathed and came to Shri Acharyaji in clean clothes. Then Shri Acharyaji gave him the Name and performed Brahma-sambandh. Afterwards he said, “Now, bring whatever is rightfully yours and stay with us. If you go and stay anywhere else, you will again fall into bad company.” Then Narayandas went to the village, returned all the children to their mothers and fathers, took his belongings, and came to Shri Acharyaji, staying with him. He listened to the words from the holy mouth, took Mahaprasad, and found joy in his heart. Afterwards, when Shri Acharyaji proceeded to Dwarka, Narayandas stayed with Shri Acharyaji there.

After that, Shri Acharyaji said, “Narayandas! You go home.” Then Narayandas made a request, “Maharaj! My father considered me a gambler and expelled me from the region. So how will I manage at home now?” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Now he will keep you; do not worry.” Then Narayandas said, “Maharaj! Mother and father are not sevaks; so how will my dharma be carried out? If they put restrictions, then I will face difficulty.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “You will not be able to carry out the personal worship (svarup-seva). Do external employment; there is no sevak at home. Therefore, I am writing you a signature; whatever materials are possible, offer bhog and take Mahaprasad.” Then, writing the prose verse of Brahma-sambandh and the Ashtakshar, he gave them to Narayandas. Then Narayandas offered obeisance and pleaded, “Maharaj! I stayed with you for so many days, but realization did not arise in my inner being. Please bestow such grace that the pains and pleasures of the world do not hinder me at all, and that my mind remains attached to the lotus feet of Shri Thakurji.” Then Shri Acharyaji gave him his Charanamrit and taught him the book “Balbodh.”

Then Narayandas offered obeisance to Shri Acharyaji and left from Dwarka. After four years, he came home. Then his mother and father, pleased, said, “Our son has come after many days. Eat something, drink water.” Then Narayandas said, “I have become a sevak of Shri Acharyaji, so I take with my own hands. This is the grace of Shri Acharyaji. You know me, I was a gambler. Shri Acharyaji has removed all addictions. Now give me a small separate place where I can sit and take the name of Bhagwan. Whatever work you tell me to do, I will do.” Then his father became very pleased that the addiction to gambling had left. Afterwards, they gave him a separate room in the

house; there, arranging his own space, Narayandas lived. He did not speak much with anyone. Whatever his mother and father told him to do, he did. He cooked his own food, offered bhog, took Mahaprasad, and took the Name. His father became pleased: “In my old age, Narayandas has returned; now his understanding has become beautiful.” Then the father took Narayandas to the royal court. The emperor began to have all the work done through Narayandas. After some days, the father left his body.

Prasang 1 – Yearning for Shri Acharyaji’s Darshan

Then Narayandas became a magistrate and began to work. That work could not be left very much. His mind greatly desired to come to Shri Gokul; his mind greatly desired the darshan of Shri Acharyaji. Then Narayandas kept one man as a sevak, and fixed his monthly pay at four rupees, and told him, “This is your only work: every hour say this to me - ‘Bhaiyaji! When will you go to Shri Gokul for the darshan of Shri Acharyaji?’ Keep saying only this.” That sevak stayed with Narayandas. Every hour he would say, “Bhaiyaji! When will you go to Shri Gokul for the darshan of Shri Acharyaji?” Then Narayandas would say, “Yes, now I will go,” and tears would fill his eyes; he would become absorbed in the rasa of Leela. Then he would again do his work and duties. Then that sevak would say it again; he would again become absorbed. And every year he would send offerings to Shri Acharyaji. Throughout his life, in this manner, remembering Shri Gokul, he remained absorbed in Shri Acharyaji. Thus Narayandas became such a Bhagwadiya. Up to this point, let his account be told.

Varta 58 - Narayandas Bhat

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Narayandas Bhat, who lived in Mathura, his story's inner meaning is described as follows:

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Narayandas is, in the divine play (Leela), a monkey from Shri Gokul. In Mathura, he was born in the house of a Bhat (bard). He grew up, but he did not know how to compose verses or couplets. He would simply sit at a resting place (Vishrant) without work, and whatever anyone gave him, he used to survive on that.

Once, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came and performed his evening and midday Sandhya Vandana at Vishrant Ghat. Narayandas Bhat saw Shri Acharyaji there. Then a thought arose in his mind: "He is a great Mahapurush (divine soul). Let me ask him about my destiny. What has been written in my fate?"

Thinking thus, Narayandas bowed down (did dandvat) to Shri Acharyaji and asked, "Maharaj! Why have I become such a fool? I am Bhat, yet I know neither poetry nor couplets. I cannot even speak well. Since birth, I have been begging and eating to survive. Will I ever receive wealth? Is it in my fate or not? Please, kindly look at my palm and tell me."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "It is good that you do not know poetry or couplets. If you did, you would have gone around performing before kings and rich men. It is better that you did not learn them. The Lord does not give wealth to an unworthy vessel. That too is His grace. For wealth, driven by pride, corrupts many lives and leads to sins of indulgence and worldly attachments. And have you ever remained hungry? Never. Therefore, wealth is not written in your destiny. The Lord, knowing you to be an unfit vessel, does not grant it. Go tonight to Dhruv Ghat, you will see wealth there, but take care not to pick it up."

Narayandas went home, and when night came, he went to Dhruv Ghat. There he saw heaps of gold and silver lying. Tempted by greed, he began to take them. Suddenly, two men came out from the waters of Shri Yamunaji and struck Narayandas. They said, "Did Shri Acharyaji tell you to take this? Why have you come to collect it? The wealth was only shown to you to test your faith in Shri Acharyaji's

words. Take it only if you have his command."

Then Narayandas returned home and slept. The next morning, he went to Vishrant Ghat and sat there. Shri Acharyaji arrived for his morning Sandhya Vandana. Narayandas bowed down before him. Then Shri Acharyaji said, "You are indeed like an animal, no faith at all!" Narayandas humbly replied, "Maharaj! Your words are always true. I saw the wealth at Dhruv Ghat and, out of greed, began to take it. Then two men came out of the water and struck me, saying, 'Take it only if Shri Acharyaji has given permission.' Maharaj! Who were those two men? And why did you call me an animal? Please kindly explain."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Those two were messengers of Varuna. They prevented you from taking the wealth. Had you taken it, your life would have been ruined. In the divine play, you were a monkey from Shri Gokul who ate food that had not been offered (as samarpit) to the Lord. Because of that sin, you have fallen into worldly suffering in this life."

Then Narayandas bowed down and pleaded, "Maharaj! Please free me from this worldly suffering. I no longer desire wealth." Then Shri Acharyaji took Narayandas to Shri Yamunaji, bathed him, and made him perform Naam Nivedan (surrendering his name to the Lord). Then Narayandas said, "Maharaj, please grant me the opportunity to perform Bhagavad seva (service to the Lord)!"

Shri Acharyaji replied, "Is a monkey fit for performing seva in the Pushtimarg path? Therefore, you should recite the Ashtakshar Mantra day and night. Through that, you will attain Bhagavad realization. And hereafter, do not pick up anything near Shri Yamunaji's banks. Live in your house, everything will come to you there. Keep your faith firm." Saying this, Shri Acharyaji performed Sandhya Vandana and departed for Mahavan. Narayandas went home, sat there, and began to chant the Ashtakshar Mantra.

That very day, a person came and gave him ten rupees at his house. This increased Narayandas's faith. Thereafter, living at home, he continued to chant the Ashtakshar Mantra with devotion, taking refuge in Shri Acharyaji.

Prasang 1 – The Appearance of Shri Madan Mohanji through

Narayandas Bhat

Shri Madan Mohanji once commanded Narayandas Bhat, saying, “I am in Vrindavan, in Radha Bagh. Go and dig the earth there and bring me out.” Then Narayandas went to Vrindavan, dug the ground at Radha Bagh, and installed (brought out) Shri Madan Mohanji. Then he returned to Mathura. After some days, Shri Gopinathji came from Adele to Mathura. Narayandas narrated all the happenings to Shri Gopinathji. Then Shri Gopinathji performed a Panchamrit (five sacred substances) bath for Shri Madan Mohanji and seated Him on a throne.

For some days, Narayandas served Him devotedly. Afterward, Narayandas left his body. He had no relatives or family members left. Then the Vaishnavas went to Shri Gusainji and said, “Maharaj, Narayandas has passed away. Now, where shall we install Shri Madan Mohanji?” There was a Bengali Vaishnav who had once served Shri Nathji for a few days. Shri Gusainji gave Shri Madan Mohanji to that Bengali.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason behind this is that Shri Gopinathji had seated Shri Madan Mohanji on His throne. Shri Gopinathji is the form of Baldevji. His sevaks (worshippers) follow the path of Maryada Marg (the path of discipline).

Therefore, Shri Gusainji gave Shri Madan Mohanji to the Bengali to perform Maryada Marg style of worship. He did not give Him to a Pushtimargiya Vaishnav, nor did he keep Him himself. If Shri Madan Mohanji had been a deity served directly by Shri Acharyaji, then Shri Gusainji would have kept Him personally.

Because Shri Gopinathji had seated Him on the throne, the Vaishnavs of the Vallabh lineage still go to have His darshan. Thus, Narayandas was such a blessed devotee of the Lord.

Varta 59 - Narayandas Luhana

Now, about the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Narayandas Luhana, who lived in Thatta. The feeling of his story is told as follows.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Narayandas, in the divine play (Leela), is the companion (sakhi) of Vishakhaji. In the Leela, her name is “Ketaki.” She manifested in the house of a Luhana (merchant) in the village of Thada. That Luhana was a wealthy merchant. When the child was born, there was great celebration. Later, when Narayandas turned five years old, his entire body became covered with boils. His father called many learned physicians from various places and tried different medicines, but Narayandas did not get well.

Then Narayandas’s father said to everyone, “Whoever cures Narayandas will be given one lakh rupees.” Even after five years, the boils did not heal, and Narayandas became very weak and thin.

After some time, while performing the circumambulation of the earth, Shri Acharyaji arrived at Thada. Someone told Narayandas’s father, “Shri Vallabhacharyaji has come. He has refuted the doctrine of Maya (illusion). If he showers his grace, Narayandas will be cured.” Hearing this, Narayandas’s father placed Narayandas in a palanquin, took one thousand rupees as an offering, and went to see Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu.

He bowed down to Shri Acharyaji and placed the thousand rupees before him. Shri Acharyaji, slightly annoyed, said, “Am I a physician who cures boils? I only accept those who are my sevaks and make them hear the divine name of Bhagwan. Let your son hear the name of Shri Thakurji from me, and take this offering back. I do not need it.”

Then Narayandas’s father placed his turban before Shri Acharyaji, held his feet, bowed down, and began to cry. He said, “You are God. I surrender this son to you. I take your refuge. Only if you show mercy upon me will I return home.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Now take your son home. I will come to your house and heal him, so that the world may not come to know of it. If I heal him right now, then everyone suffering from various troubles will start running after me.”

Then Narayandas's father said, "Maharaj! If I go home and you go elsewhere, how will I ever get your feet again? Please place your hand on my head as a promise that you will indeed come to my home. If you bless me, I will go."

Shri Acharyaji said, "I will not place my feet or hand on your head. You are not a divine being. You are only showing humility for your own selfish gain. You have no true love (preeti). Narayandas is a divine soul, and I will take him into my refuge. I will place my hand on his head."

Then Narayandas's father said, "Maharaj! My only request is for my son. I want nothing else. Please place your hand on his head." Then Shri Acharyaji went near Narayandas, who was lying in the palanquin, and saw that he was almost unconscious. He placed both his feet on Narayandas's head and chest and then covered him with a cloth. He said, "Now take him home."

When Narayandas's father reached home and uncovered him, there was not a single boil on his body, he was completely healed and his body looked beautiful. When the father lifted him into his lap, Narayandas said, "Where is the one who has made me well?"

His father said, "He is outside the village near the pond." Narayanadas said, "Send a man with me; I wish to go there." The father replied, "You can go by horse or palanquin." Narayanadas said, "You fool! One should go on foot for the darshan of God."

So Narayandas took a man with him and went to Shri Acharyaji, bowed down, and humbly said, "Please show your grace and take me into your refuge. You placed your feet on my head and chest and healed me, but you did not give me your darshan—why so?" Then Shri Acharyaji bathed Narayandas in the pond and made him hear the divine name.

Narayandas said, "Maharaj! I was like an orphan, trapped in the body, born in a wealthy house but surrounded day and night by bad company. I was a great sinner, but you have shown such great mercy upon me. All this could only happen through your grace. Now please command me what I should do so that I may attain liberation. May wisdom, patience, and devotion to your feet never leave me."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "When I placed my feet on your head and heart, I gave you all dharma (divine virtues). Now I am granting you the service (seva) of Bhagwan. Serve Him with love." Then he asked

for kumkum (vermilion), pressed both his lotus feet upon a cloth to make their impression, and gave it to Narayandas as the seva of his charanaravind (divine feet). He said, “Now go home. I have given you firm devotion. Also, give your father the one thousand rupees he brought.”

Narayandas said, “Maharaj! Please keep it as my offering.” Shri Acharyaji said, “You will give many offerings later. Your father will die in a few days. Then we shall accept it. This is not divine wealth.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Your name shall be Narayandas. Earlier, everyone called you Nariya.” Then Narayandas bowed down, took leave from Shri Acharyaji, and went home. He gave his father one thousand rupees. The father said, “I had given this as an offering to Shri Acharyaji, why did you bring it back? He has done me great kindness by curing you. If he wants more, I am ready to give ten or even five thousand more.”

Narayandas said, “He wants nothing. He has manifested only to uplift souls through spiritual means.” Hearing this, the father kept quiet. Later, Narayandas took a separate mansion and began to serve the impressions of Shri Acharyaji’s lotus feet with devotion.

After some time, Shri Acharyaji again set out on the pilgrimage around the earth. During this period, Narayandas stopped accepting water served by anyone’s hands. If any Vaishnav came, he would fill water himself or let the Vaishnav fill it, but not others. Hearing this, his father became angry and said, “Are you some servant who fetches water? Who taught you this?”

Narayandas said, “Do not speak to me like this. I will do as my mind commands. Who are you to question me?” Angered, the father said, “You live on my wealth, eat and spend it, and yet speak to me so arrogantly?” Hearing this, Narayandas sent back all ornaments, clothes, vessels, and whatever wealth he had to his father’s house.

The father became upset. The king (Badshah) heard all this and gave Narayandas the position of chief minister (Diwan). Whatever Narayandas decided in the court of the ruler was accepted. He earned great wealth and sent many offerings to Shri Acharyaji. Whenever a Vaishnav came, he would honor them, give them wealth, please them, and send them away happily. Many years passed in this way.

Prasang 1 – Narayandas Imprisoned and Freed by

Grace

Once, the king became angry with Narayandas and put him in prison. A fine of five lakh rupees was imposed on him. He was bound under the condition that he would pay five thousand rupees daily; if he failed to pay on any day, he would receive five hundred lashes. At that time, in a village called Adel, two Brahmin Vaishnavs, both sevaks of Shri Acharyaji lived there. They had a daughter who had come of age, but they had no money to get her married. They decided, “Let us go to Thada and get some money from Narayandas to arrange the marriage.”

Thus, the two Brahmin brothers went from Adel to Thada. When they arrived, they heard that Narayandas was in prison. They decided, “We will leave tomorrow morning.”

A man informed Narayandas that “Two Brahmin Vaishnavs, sevaks of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, have come here. Hearing that you are imprisoned, they plan to leave tomorrow morning.” Narayandas sent his own man to the two Vaishnavs with the message, “Please meet me before you leave in the morning. I am very fortunate that you have come here at such a time to give me your darshan.”

The messenger conveyed the message to the Brahmin Vaishnavs. So, early in the morning, after completing their ablutions and bath, the two Vaishnavs took with them the sacred water (charanamrit) of Shri Acharyaji and Shri Nathji, and a pouch of mahaprasad, and went to meet Narayandas. When they arrived, Narayandas rose to greet them and made them sit close to him with affection. The Vaishnavs then gave him the charanamrit of Shri Acharyaji, the charanamrit of Shri Nathji, and the pouch of mahaprasad. Narayandas stood up and reverently placed them on his head.

After asking about Shri Acharyaji’s wellbeing, Narayandas said, “I am greatly blessed that Vaishnavs have given me their darshan here in prison. This means my imprisonment will end today. Now I know that Shri Acharyaji and Shri Thakurji have shown me their grace, for it is only by their compassion that I received the darshan of Vaishnavs in this place and at this time.” As they were talking, five bags containing five thousand rupees each arrived from Narayandas’s home. The gatekeeper sealed them and sent them to Narayandas.

Narayandas kept the Vaishnavs busy in conversation until the bags arrived. When the bags came, he dismissed the messenger and told the Vaishnavs, “Please take these and go quickly. Either return to your

village or stay quietly somewhere nearby for a few days. Do not reveal that you met me. Nothing could have been done otherwise. I could not serve you more this time." Saying this, he bowed to them and said, "Please offer my pranam to Shri Acharyaji and use this money for your daughter's marriage."

The Vaishnavs took the five thousand rupees and returned home. Soon after, the king came and sat in the court. He asked the minister, "Have Narayandas's five bags arrived?" The minister said, "Yes, the bags came. I had them sealed by the gatekeeper and sent to Narayandas." Then the treasurer was asked, "Have you received Narayandas's five thousand rupees?" The treasurer replied, "No, they haven't come to me." The king became angry and ordered, "Bring Narayandas here from the prison." The guards brought Narayandas before the king. The king asked, "Why have the bags not arrived today?"

Narayandas replied, "They could not come today." The king summoned the lash-bearers and said, "Frighten him, but do not strike yet." They stood on both sides of Narayandas, ready to whip. The king said, "Now tell the truth, or your skin will be stripped off your body. The money left your house, where have you hidden it?"

Narayandas said, "Two of my guru-brother Brahmin Vaishnavs came to me. They had no means to marry their daughter. They came to me from far away, hoping for my help. So, I gave them all five bags. I thought, 'Today I will anyway receive five hundred lashes. At least they will be able to accomplish their task.' So I gave them the money. Now, do whatever you wish."

Hearing this, the king fell silent for a moment and thought to himself, "On this earth, there are such selfless and virtuous people! Truly, this land stands firm upon righteousness." Then the ruler said, "Narayandas, I commend you. I am very pleased with you. You are truly faithful to your guru's path." He then ordered a horse and garments of honor to be brought and said to Narayandas, "Continue your work as before." He forgave all his debts and punishments.

Narayandas was dressed in the robes of honor, seated on a horse, and sent home. When the two Brahmin Vaishnavs heard that Narayandas had been freed from prison and returned home honored, they went joyfully to meet him. Narayandas received them warmly and said, "It was by your darshan that I was released."

He then gave them a bag of one thousand gold coins as an offering for Shri Acharyaji and also gave them some gifts for themselves, saying,

“Please offer my pranam to Shri Acharyaji.” The two brothers took leave of Narayandas, returned to Gokul after some days, and presented themselves before Shri Acharyaji, placing the thousand gold coins as an offering and narrating the entire incident.

Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, “Such love should exist for Vaishnavs. One whose heart is filled with such dharma is always blessed.” The two Brahmin Vaishnavs then returned to Adel and happily arranged the marriage of their daughter. Thus, Narayandas was a most blessed and devoted sevak, graced by Shri Acharyaji. His earlier name was Nariya. When he became a sevak of Shri Acharyaji, he was given the name Narayandas.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The two Brahmin Vaishnav brothers bore ordinary names and were not directly connected to the divine play of Pushti Leela; hence, their varta is not told in detail. Yet, as they took refuge under Shri Acharyaji, by the power of that refuge, they became free from worldly sorrow and attained eligibility for liberation. Therefore, Narayandas was a great devotee favored by divine grace. His varta concludes here.

Varta 60 - One Kshatrani of Singhanand

Now, the sevakni of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, a Kshatrani (lady of the warrior caste), who lived alone in Singhanand, her story’s meaning is being told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the Divine Leela, in Nandgaon, there is the elder Upanand. His daughter-in-law’s name is Sunanda, and this Kshatrani is her manifestation. Therefore, she possesses a childlike feeling. She was born in the house of a Kshatriya in Singhanand. When she was eleven years old, she was married. A month after her marriage, her husband developed smallpox and died. She then stayed at her parents’ home. She managed all the household work. Later, when she turned thirty, both her parents also passed away. She had one brother, and she had great affection for him. However, she did not get along with her brother’s wife, her sister-in-law. So, this Kshatrani moved to another house.

Then her brother said, “Why have you separated yourself?” The sister replied, “Daily quarrels are not good. What difference does it make if I

live separately? I am still under your command. Tell me whatever work needs to be done." Then the brother gave her one hundred rupees and said, "Keep this for your expenses." The sister said, "Right now, I have enough for my needs. If I ever don't have it, then please give it." The brother said, "Right now, I have some cash in circulation for business, so take this now. Who knows where I will be later?" So she accepted it and kept it.

In Singhanand, the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law were sevaknis of Shri Acharyaji. She started visiting there daily. One day she said, "Please let me do some work or service for Shri Thakurji." Then the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law said, "You are not a sevakni of Shri Acharyaji, so how can you do service?" She said, "When Shri Acharyaji arrives, please make me a sevakni."

Later, Shri Thakurji of the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law said, "This Kshatrani knows well how to make beautiful embroidery designs on fabric. Have her embroider for me in my garden." Then the daughter-in-law said to Shri Thakurji, "She is not a sevakni of Shri Acharyaji. And she will not take any fabric carefully, so how can I have her do embroidery?" Then Shri Thakurji said to that daughter-in-law, "That Kshatrani is a divine soul. Therefore, have her do the embroidery. In a few days, Shri Acharyaji will arrive, and then she will become a sevakni, a beloved one of the Lord. Therefore, have her do it. It is my command. You will not be at fault."

Then the daughter-in-law gave a white piece of cloth to that Kshatrani and said, "Please embroider small floral designs on this." She happily accepted it, considering it a great fortune, took it home, and began to embroider with love and devotion. Though she did not worry about keeping the cloth clean and pure, yet, knowing it belonged to Shri Thakurji, she carefully completed the embroidery, and then gave it to the daughter-in-law. The daughter-in-law then offered that embroidered piece to Shri Thakurji.

Later, that night, Shri Thakurji appeared in a dream to the Kshatrani and said, "I have accepted your embroidered work with love and devotion. Now, in two days, Shri Acharyaji will arrive. Your brother has Shri Thakurji in his house, go and bring Him from there to your home and serve Him." Then that Kshatrani woke up and said, "When will it be morning so that I can go to my brother's house?"

When morning came, Kshatrani went to her brother's house. Her brother and sister-in-law had been quarreling for the past two days. Because of the discord, no food had been cooked. The brother said,

“Sister! How come you are here today?” She said, “My heart feels restless when I’m alone. Please give me your Shri Thakurji, so I may worship Him.” The brother, being pleased, said, “Sister, you have said a very good thing. Shri Thakurji has been without food for two days because my wife keeps quarreling. Take Him.”

Then she said, “Please give Him to me with your own hands. If I take Him myself, your wife may quarrel with me.” So the brother bathed and gave Shri Thakurji to her. She joyfully brought Him home, cooked food, offered bhog (offering), and took the Mahaprasad.

Later, when Shri Acharyaji arrived in Thaneswar, the daughter-in-law said, “Shri Acharyaji has arrived. I am going for darshan. Will you come?” The Kshatrani said, “I have brought Shri Thakurji from my brother’s house; I will bring Him along from home.” The daughter-in-law said, “Bring Him quickly.” Then the Kshatrani brought Shri Thakurji and went with the daughter-in-law to Thaneswar.

She bowed to Shri Acharyaji. The daughter-in-law narrated everything about the Kshatrani to Him and then humbly requested, “Maharaj! Please bestow Your grace upon her and accept her in shelter.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “I already know. Shri Thakurji has already shown His grace upon her.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said to the Kshatrani, “Go and bathe, then come back.” So the Kshatrani bathed in the Saraswati river and returned to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu gave her the Name (initiation), performed Brahmasambandh for her, and later bathed Shri Thakurji with Panchamrit, naming Him ‘Shri Navneetpriyaji.’ He placed the deity upon the Kshatrani’s head and said, “Serve with full devotion.”

Then the Kshatrani and the daughter-in-law bowed to Shri Acharyaji and returned to Singhanand to serve. From the fourth day onward, seeing the deep love of that Kshatrani, Shri Thakurji began to show affectionate signs of grace.

Prasang 1 – The Kshatrani’s Complete Detachment and

Loving Service

All of the Kshatrani's wealth gradually diminished, and she became poor and without possessions. She sustained herself by spinning thread, which she sold for her livelihood, and through that, she continued her service.

At her house door, vegetable sellers, fruit sellers, and others would come to sell vegetables, fruits, nuts, and such. Shri Thakurji would say, "Mother! The vegetable-seller has come; weigh and bring some." Then the Kshatrani would take a little of each kind, a small amount of everything.

When fruit-sellers or nut-sellers came, Shri Thakurji would call out, "Mother! The fruit and nuts have come for sale!" Then she would buy all types for one paisa. The vegetable woman thought, "Her son must be very dear to her. She never lets him come out, so that no evil eye may fall upon him." So she always gave this Kshatrani the first choice of goods.

Those who earned a lot in the village would tell the sellers, "First go to that woman's house and sell to her." So the Kshatrani would buy. She would then prepare the vegetables, some raw, some boiled, some roasted and cook them lovingly as offerings to Shri Thakurji.

Sometimes, when the vegetable-sellers went away early, Shri Thakurji Himself would go to the door, call out to the woman, and say, "Come quickly! My mother will buy." Hearing that sweet voice, the woman would run to the door, but when she entered, she would see no one there.

Then the Kshatrani would say, "Lala! Do not go outside; the evil eye may fall on You." Shri Thakurji would reply, "If the vegetable woman goes away, from where will you bring vegetables? How will you offer me food?" She would say, "Lala! Many sellers will come again, but you must not leave the temple. The eyes of wicked villagers may fall upon You."

Sometimes, when the vegetable-seller left without hearing the call, Shri Thakurji, like a little child, would get upset and say, "The vegetable woman has gone! Now from where will you bring vegetables? How will you make offerings? I will not eat without vegetables!"

Then she would say, "Lala! Another seller will come, and I'll buy from her. And if no one comes, I will bring all kinds from the market myself. Please don't get upset; stay happy." Then Shri Thakurji, like a

child, would climb on her shoulder and say, “When will you bring them?” showing His grace in this way.

On the days when there was no money to prepare offerings for the child-form of Thakurji, she would cover a roti with ghee and keep it aside. Sometimes, late at night or at midnight, Shri Thakurji would awaken and say, “Mother! I am hungry.” Then she would say, “Lalji! Today, no special food is prepared, only rotis.” Shri Thakurji would say, “Give me one, rubbed with ghee.”

Then the woman would spread ghee over the roti, sprinkle some sugar powder, roll it slightly with her hand, and place it in Shri Thakurji’s hand. He would bite it gently with His teeth and eat, like a child. After eating, He would drink water, chew some betel, and then lie down to rest.

The woman would then feel much sadness in her heart, thinking, “Today I could not prepare any special dish for Lala because I had no money. Tomorrow I must borrow some to make something delicious. Tonight, He had to eat plain rotis.”

So one day, early in the morning, she went to a neighbor, borrowed ghee and sugar, cleaned the flour, and made four kinds of delicacies, keeping them ready. When it was midnight, Shri Thakurji woke up and said, “Mother! I am hungry.” She rose and placed the delicacies before Him. He ate, and then said, “Why did you not keep rotis today? You didn’t have money, so where did you get these delicacies?”

She replied, “What could I do, Lala? I have no one to earn money. I had no cash. Last night, you ate dry rotis, and my heart felt so bad. So I borrowed from a neighbor and made these dishes. I will repay it in two or three days after selling the spun thread.”

Then Shri Thakurji said, “Mother! Why did you borrow and make these? I like ghee-smeared rotis. If you take loans, debts rise upon the head and are hard to repay. When the lender asks, you will feel distress. So do not do this again. I like your simple rotis with ghee. From now on, make those and keep them ready.”

The woman did as instructed. When she earned enough money from selling thread, she made delicacies. If not, she offered the ghee-covered rotis.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Thakurji forbade taking loans because debt is like a sin. The mind that remembers Shri Thakurji should not get entangled in borrowing. Until one repays the

debt, the fruits of one's service do not reach them; instead, they go to the one who lent the money.

Therefore, Shri Thakurji prevented that woman from taking loans. Some may wonder, since Shri Thakurji Himself showed childlike grace to her, why did He not have Lakshmi grant her wealth? Why such hesitation in accepting even the simple rotis for child-bhoga (offerings)?

The reason is this: when Shri Thakurji resides in Braj, Lakshmiji also wishes to enter Braj, but she cannot. It is said in the Gopi Geet of the Bhagavat, "Jayati te 'dhikam janmana vrajaḥ, śrayata indrīr adṛśyatātra hi" meaning Lakshmi herself desired to come to Braj but could not enter.

Hence, though Lakshmi is the divine consort and servant of Shri Thakurji, she acts only according to His will. Shri Thakurji did not give wealth to this woman so that her mind would not be distracted. If she had abundant money, how would her devotion and humility increase?

Without wealth, while spinning the wheel, her mind remained absorbed in Shri Thakurji. She would think "Let me prepare this today. My Lala will eat rotis. Good, good, I will arrange something lovingly." In this way, her heart stayed attached to the Lord.

Therefore, He only gave her enough for daily needs, not excess. Without pride in wealth, she lived humbly, and her devotion grew. Lakshmi acts under the Lord's command, so how could there be excess wealth?

Some may wonder, if Shri Thakurji came at midnight to ask her for food, what about ritual purity then? Or when He climbed her shoulder to call the vegetable-seller, what of impurity? The answer is this: in Shri Acharyaji's Pushtimarg, Shri Thakurji resides in the Maryada-Pushti manner. In the temple, He accepts all offerings through the Pushti (graceful) mood, every material, garment, ornament and appears formally (as per ritual propriety) for darshan but does not speak.

However, in His Bhaktoddharak (uplifting devotees) form, He appears to His beloved devotees personally, speaks, and interacts in human-like Leela. There, ritual purity has no place, only love and affection prevail.

Thus, in the temple, the Kshatrani served Shri Thakurji with all due

rules and rituals. But when Shri Thakurji came at midnight or asked her personally, that was His Bhaktoddharak form, where love is the supreme dharma. The Supreme Blissful Lord plays with His devotees, speaks, laughs, and expresses feelings. There, ritual impurity does not exist, only divine love reigns.

Hence, in the homes of devotees, in the path of Grace (Pushtimarg), Shri Thakurji manifests and interacts in His Bhaktoddharak form. Devotees who recognize this and serve lovingly without rigid ritual concerns do not commit offense. In the temple, service should follow Maryada-Pushti (discipline with grace), but in the home, love without restriction is dearest to Him. The Lord hungers for love, not for ritual formality.

Therefore, if one leaves rituals out of arrogance, they become offenders; but if they transcend ritual through true love, they are exalted. Understand this distinction well.

Thus, this Kshatrani was a vessel of Shri Acharyaji's grace, with whom Shri Thakurji interacted like a child. In the Divine Leela, she is the daughter-in-law of the cowherd Upanand; there, she has the feeling of a son, and here too, the same firm feeling of maternal love exists. Hence, up to this point, the story of the Kshatrani.

Varta 61 - Veerbai mother of Damodardas

Now, the sevakni of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, the mother of Damodardas Kayastha, whose name was Veerbai, lived in Sergarh. The following describes her story and its sentiment.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the Divine Leela, she is the Pulindi, known there as Bandewi. She had firm devotion to Girirajji. When Shri Acharyaji appeared, Shri Govardhandhar also manifested, and at that time, all the divine associates of the Lord appeared on earth.

In Sergarh, there was a Kayastha merchant who once went to Kashi for trade. In Kashi, a Kayastha family gave birth to Veerbai. She was later betrothed to Kayastha from Sergarh and married him. Veerbai bore a son in Sergarh, who was named Damodardas.

When Damodardas turned nine years old, a new officer came to Sergarh who was very corrupt. Whoever he saw with wealth, he accused them falsely and took all their possessions, even forcing people to steal. Then Veerbai's husband said, "Now what should we do? The officer has taken all the wealth."

Then that wise woman said, "Gather all the remaining wealth and give it to me. I will go to my parents' home in Kashi. When another good officer comes, I will return. But if this same officer remains, you too come to Kashi."

Her husband agreed, saying, "You have spoken well." So, the Kayastha gathered all the wealth, sealed it within ten or fifteen days, and handed it to his wife Veerbai. He sent her along with their son Damodardas and two daughters to Kashi.

Veerbai stayed in Kashi. After four months, that wicked officer in Sergarh falsely accused a Brahmin and looted his entire house. Brahmin had two idols of Gaur Swaroop and Lalaji. The officer seized their ornaments, clothes, and utensils. The Brahmin's wife began to weep. The Brahmin told her, "Do not cry. What will tears do now?"

When that officer was passing through the market on a horse, the

Brahmin took a sword, struck him down from his horse, and stabbed his stomach with a dagger, killing him. The officer's men then killed the Brahmin. Thus, both died.

When the king heard of this, he sent another officer to Sergarh. This one was a good man and brought peace to everyone. He granted two rupees a month to the widow of the slain Brahmin. Peace returned to Sergarh, and the people who had fled returned to the village.

That Brahmin's widow then went to Veerbai's husband and said, "I cannot worship Shri Thakurji alone; I have no wealth." The Kayastha replied, "My wife and children are in Kashi. Now that peace has returned, I am calling them back. When they come, we will take care of Thakurji."

The Brahmin's widow agreed. Those Thakurji idols had appeared on the riverbank in Sergarh where that Brahmin had once gone. Later, the Kayastha sent four respectable villagers to Kashi to bring Veerbai back.

When they reached Kashi, they told Veerbai, "Now there is a new officer in Sergarh, and he is a good man. Your husband has sent for you. Please return."

Veerbai gathered her son Damodardas, her two daughters, and the chest of wealth, and began her journey from Kashi to Sergarh. After traveling five stages, they stopped in a small village for the night. Thieves followed them. Late at night, when everyone was asleep, the thieves stole the chest.

In the morning, realizing it, they buried it in the sand outside the village and returned. When Veerbai awoke and found the chest gone, she said, "What shall I do now? All my household wealth was in that chest!"

She asked the villagers, but they said, "How would we know?" Grieving, Veerbai sat near the pond and began to weep.

At that time, Shri Acharyaji, while doing his circumambulation of the earth, came to that very pond and performed his morning sandhya prayers. Seeing the woman crying, he asked, "Why is this divine soul weeping so much?"

He approached her and said, "What sorrow has befallen you?" Veerbai said, "Maharaj, I am struck by great misery. I had a large family and much wealth, but my chest of wealth was stolen last night. I have no

one here and nowhere to go." She then told him the entire story of how she came from Kashi. Shri Acharyaji felt compassion and said, "Do not cry. Shri Thakurji will make everything right."

Veerbai bowed and said, "Maharaj! If that wealth is found, half of it will be yours. Let my whole family live by your grace, and I shall remain your dasi forever, never forgetting your favor." Shri Acharyaji replied, "You are a divine soul; you belong to us. I do not need your wealth."

Then Shri Acharyaji instructed his sevak Krishnadas Meghna, "The thieves have buried the chest in the dust. Go and show her where it is." Krishnadas went with Veerbai, found the spot, and unearthed the chest. He brought it before Shri Acharyaji and said, "Maharaj, please take half. The other half is yours. You must accept me as your sevak, for I found it through your grace."

Shri Acharyaji said, "You are still new to this path. This is not the way of our Pushtimarg. You do not yet understand. Take your wealth and go to Sergarh. When I come to Sergarh, I will make you my sevak and do as you say."

Veerbai prayed, "Maharaj, you are the Lord Himself. If you do not take this wealth, why would you come to Sergarh? Your darshan is rare and divine. Shri Thakurji has been merciful to let me see you. Please tell me your name and take half the wealth."

Shri Acharyaji said, "I will come to your village and accept you as my sevak. The Thakurji with the Brahmin's widow will be installed in your house. Therefore, I will surely come to Sergarh. Then your wish shall be fulfilled."

Veerbai said, "Maharaj, the body is uncertain, and to speak much before you is my offense. Please place your holy feet on my head and promise that you will indeed come to Sergarh. Your touch will keep my mind pure."

Shri Acharyaji, seeing her pure devotion, became very pleased. He placed his lotus feet on Veerbai's head and promised, "I will come to Sergarh and accept you." Veerbai bowed low and, with her son and daughters, returned to Sergarh. She told her husband everything that had happened and how Shri Acharyaji had blessed her.

She said, "Shri Acharyaji told me that Thakurji, who is with that Brahmin widow, will be installed in our home. Which Brahmin widow is this?" Her husband said, "That widow lives alone; her husband was

killed. Every day she says, ‘Please install my Thakurji.’”

Veerbai told her husband, “Do not delay. Bring those Thakurji idols home. Shri Acharyaji will certainly come within two or four days. When he arrives, if she refuses to give the idols, take them in the name of Shri Thakurji’s command. Otherwise, she will never part with them later.”

Her husband went to the Brahmin widow and said, “My wife and children have returned from Kashi. If you wish to give the Thakurji idols, please do so now. Otherwise, we will install another Thakurji.”

The Brahmin widow said, “I already told you I cannot perform puja. Take them now.” He replied, “If you ever ask for them, I will not return them.” The widow said, “I will not ask again. I have no wealth or people left.” So he said, “You take one Thakurji, and I will take one. Come install them at my house.” The widow kept Lalaji, and the Kayastha took the Gaur Swaroop. They installed both idols in their respective homes.

After four days, Shri Acharyaji came to Sergarh and stopped in a garden near the river. He told Krishnadas, “Do not announce our arrival to Veerbai immediately. Let her heart rejoice when she hears.” Krishnadas went to the village, met Damodardas, and said, “Go tell your mother that Shri Acharyaji has arrived in the garden near the river.”

Damodardas returned home and told his mother, “Shri Acharyaji has arrived, and one of his sevaks told me to inform you.” Hearing this, Veerbai immediately ran to the garden, bowed before Shri Acharyaji, and pleaded, “Maharaj, please come to our home and take our entire family under your protection. We have kept the Thakurji idols, as you said; please install them on my head.”

Shri Acharyaji said, “You are a divine soul, fit for Bhagavad seva. Therefore, you will receive Naam and Brahmasambandh initiation. Your family members are ordinary souls, but they will receive Naam. Through you, all of them shall attain liberation. Now, bathe in the river and return.”

Veerbai bathed and returned. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu gave her Naam and Brahmasambandh initiation, saying, “Now go home and send your husband to me, and I shall come to your house.” Veerbai returned home and told her husband, “Shri Acharyaji is in the garden by the river. Please invite him home. Let us all become his sevaks.”

Her husband said, “You also come with me.” Together they went, bowed to Shri Acharyaji, and brought him to their house. Shri Acharyaji gave Naam initiation to all family members.

He then bathed Shri Thakurji in panchamrit and seated them on a sacred platform. He installed the Gaur Swaroop on Veerbai’s head and named him Shri Kapurrayaji. The other idol, Lalaji, was named Shree Navneetpriyaji.

He then performed the rituals, swinging Shri Navneetpriyaji in a cradle and showing the ways of Pushtimarg seva. Veerbai kept Shri Acharyaji at her home for five days, learning the full method of seva. She offered half of her wealth to Shri Acharyaji, which he accepted as bhent (offering). Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji continued his circumambulation of the earth.

Prasang 1 – Veerbai’s Service to Shri Thakurji

Veerbai began to serve Shri Thakurji with deep love. After some days, Shri Thakurji began to display affection toward her. Later, Veerbai conceived. When the last part of the night had passed, she gave birth to a son. Everyone began to celebrate, and her relatives gathered for the birth rituals. But during that time, Shri Thakurji’s usual four-hour morning period passed, and he remained asleep.

Veerbai became very distressed and said, “My Shri Thakurji has overslept, and no one wakes Him! What shall I do?” She called for someone to wake Him, but no one dared. As time passed, her sorrow grew. She cried, “Why did this sinful son have to be born at this time! My Thakurji slept last night, and none will wake Him. What shall I do now?”

Her heart filled with unbearable separation. Then Shri Thakurji spoke from His bed, “Why do you weep? If no one will wake Me, then you wake Me yourself.” Veerbai replied, “Maharaj! I am impure, defiled by childbirth. How can I touch you?” Shri Thakurji said, “Apply cow dung, bathe, tie your cloth, and wake me yourself. I will not accept seva from anyone else. It is My command, and there is no offense in this for you.”

Then Veerbai, obeying, applied cow dung, bathed, tied her cloth, and woke Shri Thakurji. She performed the mangala arati, adorned Him, cooked food, offered bhog, and partook of the prasad. Afterwards, she purified all the utensils and clothes separately, performed panchamrit bathing for Shri Thakurji, and continued the seva as per the

Pushtimarg tradition.

Shri Thakurji, pleased, said to her, “You obeyed My command and served Me even in impurity. Then you purified everything again as per the proper rules. Therefore, I am very pleased with you.” From that time, Shri Thakurji accepted seva from Veerbai even during impurity periods but from no one else. Thus, Veerbai became the blessed devotee graced by Shri Acharyaji’s mercy. Her story is told up to this point.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This story shows that even if one is very pure or of high birth, without love, Shri Thakurji does not accept their seva. And even if one is impure, lowly, or of humble birth, if there is love, the Lord accepts their service. In this way, even during impurity, mourning, or monthly periods, Veerbai continued seva. However, because her household was large, others did not serve during those times.

Her story is beyond expression. Just as the Pulindi in Divine Leela experienced all divine rasas by applying the kumkum from the Lord’s lotus feet, so too did Veerbai experience every rasa through her loving devotion. Such is the mysterious way of divine love. The path of love is beyond worldly and scriptural logic. Only those filled with divine understanding can appreciate such tales.

Veerbai forever remained absorbed in the blissful Leela of Shri Thakurji. In the divine realm, Girirajji’s foremost beloved Haridasrai is with her; therefore, her bhav is indescribable.

Varta 62 - A husband and wife from Singhnand

Now, the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevaks, a husband and wife, who were residents of Singhanand, is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play (leela), both of them were friends (sakhis) of Vishakhaji. The man's name was Ranga, and the woman's name was Hansa Sakhi. Both of them went to bathe in Shri Yamunaji, where they met Shri Thakurji. They became immersed in various kinds of joyful divine pastimes. Later, when it was time for the water pastimes, Shri Swaminiji and Vishakhaji came to bathe in Shri Yamunaji. At that time, Shri Thakurji came out of the Yamuna and stood behind the trees. Both these sakhis, while playing in the water, remained standing there. Then Shri Swaminiji called out, "Ranga, Hansa, come to us." But their minds were absorbed in Shri Thakurji, how could they come back? So they did not hear. Then Shri Swaminiji said, "Vishakha! These two of your sakhis are very obstinate. I called them, yet they did not come." Then Vishakhaji called out, "Ranga, Hansa, come here!" Yet they did not come. Then Vishakhaji said, "Such pride and arrogance they have developed that even after so much calling, they do not reply! Fall to the ground!" And both of them fell to the ground.

They were born in Singhanand, in the house of two Kshatriyas. Ten years passed, and both came of marriageable age, and their marriage took place. Then dispassion (vairagya) arose in both of their hearts. They said to each other, "Pleasures of the senses and worldly joys exist even among animals and birds. But since Shri Thakurji has granted us human birth, we should take vows and subdue our senses and body." Then both took vows, they slept on the ground, ate only fruits daily, sometimes milk, sometimes water, and observed complete fasting on Ekadashi. During the month of Kartik, one day they would eat fruits, and the next day they would fast without water. By following such vows, both their bodies became emaciated.

Their parents became angry and said, "Why are you torturing yourselves like this? What for? These are the days for you to eat and dress well! Enjoy good pleasures. Shri Thakurji has given you a body worth four coins, so enjoy the worldly happiness!" Then both of them replied, "Let dogs and donkeys enjoy worldly pleasures. We shall

continue our vows." So the parents remained silent.

Later, one day during the month of Magh, both went to bathe in the river Saraswati. At that time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu arrived in Thaneshwar. He came to the Saraswati River to perform his evening prayers (Sandhyavandan). Seeing the man and woman standing in the freezing water, he asked the Vaishnavas of Thaneshwar, "Who are these two, a man and a woman standing in such cold water? They seem extremely weak." The Vaishnavas said, "Maharaj! They are the son and daughter of Kshatriyas, a man and a woman. They have never known worldly happiness. They are always observing vows and never eat any grain. By undergoing severe austerities, they have weakened their bodies. They do not listen to their parents or anyone else."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Bring them to me somehow." So a Vaishnav went across the river and said to the two, "Come across. Shri Acharyaji is calling you. Whatever result you desire from your vows, you will attain." Hearing this, both became happy and came across the river with the Vaishnav. They offered prostrations (dandvat) to Shri Acharyaji and stood before him. Then Shri Acharyaji asked, "You are enduring such hardship and following vows, what is your purpose? Whatever fruit you desire, ask for it."

Then both said, "Maharaj! The fruit we desire is great, but our means are small. How can we obtain such a result?" Shri Acharyaji said, "Tell me what you wish for." They replied, "Our desire is that in this very birth, with this very body, Shri Thakurji should speak to us and bless us. But how can we attain Shri Thakurji through pilgrimages, vows, and spiritual practices? Therefore, what should we do? Failing, we shall abandon this body through our vows and austerities. We know no other way."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "If you give your body such pain through vows, then instead of that, engage your body and mind in the remembrance and service of Shri Thakurji. Then in this very birth, the Lord will show His grace."

Then both the man and woman said, "Maharaj! How can we serve Shri Thakurji? We have nothing. We wear only these two worn-out clothes. Our parents have wealth, but they use it for worldly enjoyment. Whatever we ask for, they will give, but not even a small coin for spiritual purpose or in Shri Thakurji's name. They bear hatred toward us. So without wealth, how can we perform divine service?"

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "It is good that they hate you. That removes

your external attachments. If you make even a little effort, working four or eight hours a day, you will find what is needed for your sustenance. Live on that. If your body suffers for the sake of service, bear the pain with patience, for Shri Thakurji Himself cannot tolerate your suffering. He will show you His grace. I will tell the Vaishnavas of Thaneshwar, they will help you. They will also assist you in trade or other work. But only if your mind remains devoted to divine service. If not, it is your decision."

Then both said, "Maharaj! Our minds are indeed devoted, but we fear our parents' opposition." Shri Acharyaji said, "Do not fear your parents' opposition. Do as I say. All your desires will be fulfilled." Then both happily said, "Maharaj! We surrender to you. Do whatever will be good for us."

Shri Acharyaji said, "After you finish your bath, since you are impure from bathing, come forward afterward." Both came forward. Then he initiated them with name submission (naam nivedan). Then Shri Acharyaji told the Vaishnavas of Thaneshwar, "Now arrange for a suitable form (swaroop) of Shri Thakurji for them."

One Vaishnav who was a Namdhari said, "Maharaj! I have two swaroops of Thakurji. I will give one Lalji." Shri Acharyaji said, "Bring it quickly." The Namdhari Vaishnav brought the swaroop. Shri Acharyaji performed a Panchamrit bath for the deity and then placed the Thakurji image on the couple's heads.

Then Vaishnavas from Singhnaand came to have Shri Acharyaji's darshan and said, "Maharaj! These two, the man and the woman, are from our place. Please see that they do not suffer in any way." Shri Acharyaji said, "We will ensure that." Then a Vaishnav said, "Maharaj! We will serve them as if they are our own lives and fulfill all their needs."

At that time, a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law who had come for darshan said, "There is ample space in my house. I will give them a place to stay and will provide everything necessary for seva, throne (singhasan), bed (sajya), etc." Then Shri Acharyaji told the couple, "Go with this daughter-in-law. The Lord will soon bless you. Wherever you live, you will find happiness. Do works that uphold the Pushtimarg faith."

Then the couple offered prostrations to Shri Acharyaji and went with the daughter-in-law to her home. There, they arranged a separate place and installed Shri Thakurji. They borrowed twenty-two rupees

from a Vaishnav, bought materials, cooked, and offered food (bhog) to Shri Thakurji, and then took mahaprasad.

They gave up all their former austerities and instead observed the Vishnupanchak fasts, four Jayantis and one Ekadashi, these five fasts related to Lord Vishnu. A Vaishnav must perform these, and no other vows are required.

Later, the man began going to the market. The Vaishnavs honored him greatly and said, “You may open a shop and take funds for it, or take monthly pay if you prefer service work, do whatever pleases you.” The man said, “My mind is inclined toward brokerage work.” So he began brokerage. The Vaishnav lovingly arranged for him to earn two rupees daily and cleared the earlier debt of twenty-two rupees. They continued their divine service.

Then the parents of both began to criticize them, saying, “Earlier these two were great renunciants. Now they beg from Vaishnavs to survive and live in others’ homes! They bring shame upon us. If they wished to live like this, they could have gone to another town. They call themselves great devotees of Thakur, but they are deceiving people.” They spread these words everywhere. One person told this to the man. The man felt deeply hurt and told his wife, “Your parents and mine are speaking ill of us everywhere.”

The wife said, “What they say is true. Earlier we had not even a coin with us. All that we now have was given by the Vaishnavs, seeing us as Shri Acharyaji’s sevaks. We are now comfortable, but such a life will not please Shri Thakurji. Our path has been spoiled. We are sustaining ourselves on the wealth meant for worship. Shame on us! Let us go somewhere no Vaishnav knows us. There, we shall earn honestly, offer bhog to Shri Thakurji, and live. Then Shri Thakurji will be pleased. So our parents’ criticism is actually justified. We indeed deserve it. Because to please Shri Thakurji, we took refuge in Shri Acharyaji and began seva. But we are not Vaishnavs who seek offerings for pride or self-interest. Therefore, we must protect our dharma. Let us take Shri Thakurji and move to another village, a little distance from here.”

Hearing his wife’s words, the husband said, “You are blessed, blessed indeed, for such wise instruction.” Then both made all arrangements and told the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, “We are leaving now. Please keep your belongings safely.”

The mother-in-law said, “If we have committed any offense, tell us.”

The daughter-in-law said, “No offense at all. Now Shri Acharyaji’s grace has been fully bestowed upon them.”

Then the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law learned from this and began to perform seva to Shri Thakurji. The man and woman, without informing any Vaishnav or their parents, quietly departed.

Prasang 1 – They Arrive at Agra

After a few days, both reached Agra. They rented a small room, it was very small indeed. They placed Shri Thakurji in one corner. In front of the altar, they made a small enclosure of sticks and clay and placed their bedding there. On one side was the kitchen, and on the other side, the items for cooking were kept. At night, both husband and wife slept near the door of the small room. The door opened to the street, so during winter and summer, they spent their nights there in this way.

Later, the rainy season came. One night it rained heavily, and both sat by the door, getting drenched. Half the night passed in this manner. Then Shri Thakurji spoke from within the temple, “Vaishnavs! Why are you getting wet? Come inside.”

The man and woman replied, “Maharaj! The room is very small. Our bodies emit impurity. How can we sleep near you? That would not be proper.” Shri Thakurji said, “I am on the upper floor. You stay below. Seeing you getting drenched causes me great sorrow. If you come inside, I will be happy.”

Then both came inside and lay down on the floor. The whole night they remained fearful, thinking, “If we sneeze, cough, or move, we might commit an offense.” Thus they stayed in constant fear.

When morning came, both thought in their minds, “Now that the rainy season has come, we should not sleep inside. But if we sleep outside, we get wet, and Shri Thakurji feels pain. So let us make a small hut at the doorway.”

So they built a small hut there and slept outside. Shri Thakurji said, “Why don’t you sleep inside? I had ordered you.” They replied, “Maharaj! We are ordinary worldly beings. It is not proper for us to stay so close. As per your order, we are not getting wet now, and the hut is below.”

Seeing their pure devotion, Shri Thakurji began to reveal His divine presence more clearly to them. They received all they needed through asking and praying. Both the man and woman were blessed recipients of Shri Acharyaji’s grace and were great devotees of Bhagwan. Thus ends their story.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): From this story, the principle is revealed that one must always fear offending Shri Thakurji. To have reverence and loving service while maintaining humility and secrecy in one’s devotion, this is the dharma of a sevak. When the sevak serves with love and keeps his dharma private, Shri Thakurji is pleased. Such was the loving devotion of this husband and wife.

Varta 63 - One Carpenter from Adel

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu had a sevak who was a carpenter by caste, working in woodcraft. He lived in Adhel. The feeling of his story is told as follows.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, he is the manifestation of Shri Thakurji's intimate friend Shri Dama. Whatever divine acts Shri Swaminiji and Shri Damodarji perform, he experiences them. Shri Swaminiji considers Shri Dama as her brother, and he is an intimate friend of Shri Thakurji. Hence, he assists in the divine play. Shri Swaminiji would ask Shri Dama about everything. One day, Shri Dama climbed onto Shri Thakurji's shoulders while playing. When Shri Swaminiji heard of this, she became displeased. Although Shri Thakurji explained things to Shri Swaminiji, still, as described in Shri Subodhini Ji, Shri Dama is the garland-maker in the divine play and represents the form of the garland. Therefore, Shri Thakurji carried him on His shoulders. Even so, Shri Swaminiji did not feel pleased. So she cursed him, "Fall upon the earth."

Then Shri Dama was born in the house of a carpenter in Adhel. When that carpenter turned twenty-three years old, upon having the darshan of Shri Acharyaji, his heart became deeply attached. Bowing down, he prayed, "Maharaj! Please accept me under your refuge."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "How will you follow the path of Pushtimarg? You have restrictions in food and family traditions." The carpenter humbly prayed, "Maharaj! What do I have to do with home and work? I will sit near you and serve by taking your darshan. I cannot live even a moment without seeing you."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Go, take a bath in Shri Yamunaji, and return." The carpenter bathed and came to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji had his name offered (formally accepted him).

Prasang 1 – The Carpenter's Deep Attachment to Shri

Acharyaji

That carpenter became fully absorbed in Shri Acharyaji's divine form.

He would sit near Shri Acharyaji and remain in his darshan. Because of this, all his family members at home began to suffer from hunger. His relatives, mother and wife went to Shri Acharyaji's mother, Ilammagaruji, and said, "This carpenter stays day and night with Shri Acharyaji. He does no work at all. How shall we manage food and living? Therefore, please tell Shri Acharyaji."

Then Mother Ilammagaruji said to Shri Acharyaji, "Why do you keep this carpenter with you? His family members are starving. Send him home so that he may attend to his work." Then Shri Acharyaji told the carpenter, "Go home and do your work." The carpenter said, "Maharaj! I cannot live without your darshan." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "My mother is displeased, so go home and do your work. I will come to you."

Then the carpenter bowed down and went home to work. Yet his mind remained fixed on Shri Acharyaji, constantly thinking, "When will He come? When will I have His darshan again?" Knowing the devotion and longing of that carpenter, Shri Acharyaji Himself went to his house. Then the carpenter immediately left his work and began to converse with Shri Acharyaji. This became his daily practice.

Then again, the family of the carpenter went to Ilammagaruji and said, "Now Shri Acharyaji Himself comes and sits with the carpenter. When he comes, the carpenter stops working and just talks. Please tell Shri Acharyaji not to do so." Then Ilammagaruji said, "Why do you go to the carpenter's house? This does not seem right. Do not sit with the carpenter." Shri Acharyaji replied, "I will continue as I do."

His affection was such that Shri Acharyaji would go to that carpenter once, give him darshan, and sit with him for an hour or two, conversing with him and showing great grace.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning here is this: first, Shri Acharyaji accepted him under refuge, allowed him to sit near, converse, and fixed his mind in the divine form. Yet, without the experience of separation, true sweetness does not settle deeply in the heart. Therefore, through the pretext of his family, Shri Acharyaji sent him home to create the experience of separation.

That pain of separation became unbearable for the carpenter. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji would Himself go and sit with him, and then again, through the pretext of his family, He would stay for one or two hours and depart. Later, when Shri Acharyaji was to go on His earthly pilgrimage (circumambulation of the Earth), if He were to leave the

carpenter suddenly, the pain of separation would have driven him into deep anguish. Hence, He made him experience the separation gradually, so that within his heart he could have the unbroken darshan of Shri Acharyaji, twenty-four hours a day.

In this way, He blessed him with inner vision, like how Shri Thakurji appeared in Braj and gave darshan to the devotees to increase their love. Such was the intensity of their love that even the blink of an eye felt like an age. Later, to heighten that love through separation, Shri Thakurji performed the cow-grazing pastime, where all day the devotees sustained themselves by singing songs like Venugit and Yugalgit, waiting for His return in the evening. Then, when He went to Mathura, they experienced day-and-night separation but felt comfort knowing that Mathura was near, and He would return. But when He went to Dwarka, they felt complete separation, yet even in that pain, they experienced divine bliss through inner realization.

In the same way, Shri Acharyaji bestowed such grace upon that carpenter that he experienced complete separation and inwardly the joy of Shri Acharyaji's divine form. Then his outer vision ceased, and with his inner vision, he remained absorbed in the Lord even while at home. Later, Shri Acharyaji proceeded on his pilgrimage of the Earth.

Thus, that carpenter was a recipient of extraordinary grace, truly belonging to the Lord. Therefore, the rest of his story is inexpressible and was not made public.

Varta 64 - One Kshatriya from East

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, a Kshatriya who lived in the east, four manzils ahead of Patna. That Kshatriya used to associate with a follower of another path. Their story with the sentiment is told here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the Divine Leela, that Kshatriya is part of Kumārika's group of sakhis (companions). In the Leela, her name is 'Mohini'. And that follower of another path is the sakhi of Mohini named 'Lakshani'. Here in the world, Lakshani took birth in the home of a Brahmin of the Gaud community in the east. Mohini was born in a Kshatriya's home.

When both were around eight years old, they used to go to study under a Pandya (teacher). As they had a connection from their previous Divine Leela, their affection grew greatly here too. When both reached fifteen years of age, one day Shri Acharyaji came for the darshan of Shri Jagannathrayaji and stayed in that village.

The father of the Kshatriya said to his son, "Go and have the darshan of Shri Jagannathrayaji with Him." So the son went with Shri Acharyaji, while the follower of the other path stayed at his own house. After some days, Shri Acharyaji went to the temple of Shri Jagannathrayaji. There were some Mayavadis there. Shri Acharyaji debated with them and defeated their doctrine of illusion.

Then that Kshatriya told his father, "It would be good to become a sevak of Shri Acharyaji." The father replied, "My wish is to die beneath the chariot of Shri Jagannathrayaji. After that, you may do as your mind desires." Then the son said, "Why would you commit such an act? Become a sevak of Shri Acharyaji and engage in the remembrance and service of Shri Thakurji." The father replied, "I have become old. Nothing more can be done by me. I have come here with only this wish." The son remained silent.

After ten days, the Rath Yatra took place. When Shri Jagannathrayaji came out on the chariot, that father fell beneath the wheel and died. Then the son came to Shri Acharyaji and said, "Maharaj! My father died under the chariot. What fruit will he attain?"

Shri Acharyaji said, "What fruit will come from dying? Without

attaining Bhagavan, there is no fruit. Wherever one's mind is at the time of death, there one goes. However, his wish was for happiness, so he went to heaven. After enjoying it for some time, he will fall again. But you are a divine soul. Through your connection, his liberation will happen."

Then that Kshatriya prayed to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! I desire to perform seva." Shri Acharyaji said, "Right now, you are in sutak (the period of impurity after a death). After the sutak is over, you will become a sevak." After the sutak period ended, the Kshatriya came and bowed down, praying, "Maharaj! Please accept me." Shri Acharyaji said, "Go and bathe, then come." The Kshatriya bathed and returned. Shri Acharyaji gave him a name and performed the Brahmasambandh initiation.

That Kshatriya saw a beautiful form of a Lala (child deity) and joyfully brought it to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji bathed the deity with Panchamrit and placed it upon the Kshatriya's head. For two days the Kshatriya stayed near Shri Acharyaji, learning the proper way of the path and receiving His instructions. Shri Acharyaji said, "Go, and with full concentration perform seva at home."

The Kshatriya bowed down and returned home. He began to serve Shri Thakurji with great devotion. After some time, Shri Thakurji began to express affection toward him. That follower of another path, who was a Brahmin, used to worship Shri Thakurji according to the rules of the path of propriety (maryada-marg). The Kshatriya was very attached to him. The Kshatriya realized through the refuge of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu that the Brahmin was a divine soul. He thought, "If he becomes a Vaishnav, that would be very good."

One day, he told the other-path Brahmin, "It would be good if you became a sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu." The Brahmin replied, "I am already a sevak of another path. How can I become a Vaishnav now?"

The Kshatriya Vaishnav said nothing and felt sad in his heart. He thought, "He is a divine soul, yet he has not become a Vaishnav. What shall I do?" Thinking thus, he went home, performed the Utthapan (waking the deity from rest) of Shri Thakurji, and offered bhog. Shri Thakurji spoke to him, "Do not worry. That follower of another path will become My sevak and will receive divine grace."

The Kshatriya said, "Maharaj! How will that happen? When I told him to become a Vaishnav, he refused. His mind is not inclined." Shri

Thakurji said, “It is my wish to accept him. In a single moment, I shall change his heart. Do one thing: someday, if that follower of another path asks you to prepare food at his house, then prepare the food there, offer it to his deity, and partake of the Mahaprasad.”

The Kshatriya said, “How can I offer bhog to the deity of a follower of another path? How can I take that prasada? It is not the practice of Shri Acharyaji’s path.” Shri Thakurji said, “Do it by my command. You will not be hindered. The bhog you offer there, I will come myself and partake of it. Therefore, you may accept the Mahaprasad. Then that person will become a Vaishnav.”

Prasang 1 – The Winter Day When the Other-Path Brahmin

Became a Vaishnav

One winter day, the Kshatriya Vaishnav rose during the last quarter of the night. He completed his rituals and, after performing Rajbhog Aarti, finished his seva. Then he went to the house of that follower of another path. The other-path Brahmin insisted greatly, saying, “Please cook here today.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The Vaishnav felt great joy in his heart, thinking, “Now he will become a Vaishnav.” Remembering Shri Thakurji’s command, he cooked the meal without sakhadi (grinding salt or spices). Though Shri Thakurji had said that if he cooked with sakhadi there would be no obstacle, yet he preserved the tradition of his own path by not using it.

He then placed the unseasoned food before that Brahmin’s Shri Thakurji, remembering Shri Acharyaji’s instructions, and prayed to Shri Govardhandhar, saying, “Maharaj! Please accept this offering and accept this divine soul as Yours.” Immediately, Shri Govardhandhar appeared, accepted the offering, and returned. The other-path Brahmin was then given Mahaprasad. The Kshatriya Vaishnav also took Mahaprasad and returned home. When it was the third watch of the day, he bathed and performed Utthapan.

The other-path Brahmin ate the Mahaprasad and went to sleep. His Thakurji, who was daily invoked and dismissed by mantras, spoke through His divine power, saying, “Today we are hungry.” The Brahmin asked, “Why are you hungry? The Kshatriya, who is Shri Acharyaji’s sevak, offered bhog. Why didn't you partake?”

The divine being (vibhuti) replied, “That Vaishnav remembered Shri Govardhannathji, and He Himself came and accepted the offering. We are the vibhutis of Purushottam. When Purushottam Himself comes and partakes, we do not go there. We enter into the deity form when invoked by mantra and accept offerings, and depart when dismissed. Such is our way. But Purushottam is not bound by mantra; He is bound only by love. The Kshatriya has such love that Purushottam Himself came to partake. Where Purushottam Himself comes to accept, we cannot act there.”

Then the other-path Brahmin performed worship with incense, lamps, and food offerings, and afterward went to the Kshatriya Vaishnav and said, “Earlier you told me to become a sevak of Shri Acharyaji, but I did not accept it, that was my mistake. Please now make me a sevak and a Vaishnav. Today you cooked food in my house, and in my home Purushottam Himself came and partook. Therefore, your Vaishnav path is truly the highest.”

The Kshatriya Vaishnav said, “Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu is returning from Kashi with Shri Jagannathrayaji. In five to seven days he will arrive here. Then you can become a sevak and a Vaishnav. I had told you earlier, but you did not accept. Now Shri Thakurji Himself has shown you grace.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This reveals that when someone desires to accept a Vaishnav’s guidance, Shri Thakurji certainly bestows His grace upon them. Even if a person receives a Vaishnav’s touch or association for just one day, it must be known that Shri Thakurji’s great mercy has occurred. To accept a divine being is truly to be accepted by Shri Thakurji Himself. Therefore, one should always consider association with a divine being as the highest blessing. This principle is thus made clear.

Later, when Shri Acharyaji arrived, He stayed at the house of that Kshatriya Vaishnav. The Kshatriya Vaishnav then said to the other-path Brahmin, “Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu has come.” The Brahmin went to Shri Acharyaji, bowed down, and prayed, “Maharaj! Please take me into Your refuge. Out of mercy, please visit my house.”

Shri Acharyaji came to his house, performed the naming ceremony, and gave names to his entire family. He then bathed the Brahmin’s Thakurji with Panchamrit, seated Him upon a cloth, offered food, and Himself partook of the offering. The Brahmin ate the remnants.

Afterward, Shri Acharyaji went to Purushottam Kshetra for the

darshan of Shri Jagannathrayaji. The Brahmin, formerly a follower of another path, became a true Vaishnav through the association of the Kshatriya Vaishnav. Thus, that Kshatriya Vaishnav became a beloved divine being, the recipient of Shri Acharyaji's grace. Their story concludes here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Therefore, satsang (association with the holy) is a great treasure. True satsang is obtained only through complete divine grace.

Varta 65 - Laghu Purushottamdas Kshatriya

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Laghu Purushottamdas Kshatriya, was a poet. He lived in Kashi. The feeling of his story is being told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the Divine Play, he is the bard (Bhat) in the house of Shri Nandrayaji. His name in the Divine Play is Umashankar. He was born in Kashi in the house of a Kshatriya. When he was eight years old, he began composing verses and couplets (kavitt and doha). He used to write poetry for kings, wealthy men, and merchants.

When Shri Acharyaji came to Kashi, he was performing his evening prayers at the Manikarnika Ghat. Krishnadas, Seth Purushottamdas, and others were all standing there. At that time, Laghu Purushottamdas, the poet, arrived. Then Seth Purushottamdas became afraid, thinking, “He composes verses for rich people; if he sings my praise in front of Shri Acharyaji, it would not be appropriate.”

So Seth Purushottamdas came near the feet of Laghu Purushottamdas and said, “When you perform now, do not recite any verses or couplets about me.” Then Laghu Purushottamdas said, “Then when will I ever meet you again? I have come here to compose poetry about you, and I will do it. If it pleases you, give me something; if not, then don’t. You are about to give me money, yet you forbid me from composing verses, that is not right.”

Then Seth Purushottamdas gave him five rupees and said, “Come to my house later, and I will give you something more. But at this time, Shri Acharyaji, my Guru, is performing evening prayers. In his presence, do not mistakenly sing my praises.” Then Laghu Purushottamdas happily said, “I will recite verses about the kings before Shri Acharyaji, not yours.” Then Seth Purushottamdas said, “Do not recite my verses; you may do as you wish with others.”

Then the poet Laghu Purushottamdas went to Shri Acharyaji and recited ten to fifteen verses about various kings. Then Shri Acharyaji, recognizing him as a divine soul, looked upon Laghu Purushottamdas with grace and said:

“Laghu Purushottamdas! You are the bard (Charan) of Shri Nandrayaji’s house. It is not right that you have abandoned singing the glory of Shri Thakurji and are instead praising worldly kings. You are a poet, an intelligent man. The praises you have sung of these kings, do they truly possess those virtues? They are filled with many diseases and sorrows, sinful like the dead, and by praising them, you have spoken falsely. That is not good. The only one truly worthy of praise is Shri Thakurji.”

As soon as Laghu Purushottamdas heard this, he came to realize. Then he bowed down to Shri Acharyaji and pleaded: “Maharaj! I have wasted my entire life in false speech. Now I have taken refuge in you. Please bless me so that I may always sing only the glories of Shri Thakurji. I have no knowledge of the praises of Shri Thakurji; therefore, I sang praises of worldly men.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Go bathe in the Ganga; then I will instruct you.” Then Laghu Purushottamdas bathed in the Ganga and came to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji initiated him by giving him a divine name, made him surrender, and gave him his own charanamrit (nectar of the Lord’s feet). Then Laghu Purushottamdas attained knowledge of Shri Thakurji’s divine pastimes and realized the true form of Shri Acharyaji.

Prasang 1 – The Poet Who Sang the Glory of Shri Govardhannathji

After that, he began composing verses of Shri Govardhannathji and Shri Acharyaji, treating them as one and the same. In this way, he began to know Shri Acharyaji as the direct manifestation of the Supreme Lord Purushottam. From that day onward, he stopped going to kings and wealthy men and stopped composing verses for them.

After some time, Shri Thakurji began to reveal his loving presence to him. He remained constantly absorbed in the divine play of the Lord. Thus, Shri Acharyaji showered his grace upon Laghu Purushottamdas. Therefore, Laghu Purushottamdas became a great devotee of God. His story is told up to this point.

Varta 66 - Kaviraj Bhat Sanodiya

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Kaviraj Bhat, was a Sanodiya Brahmin living in Mathura. The sentiment of his story is being told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, Kaviraj is the sage Shandilya, the family priest of Shri Nandarayaji. He was born in Mathura in the house of a priest. He had three brothers; among them, two were foolish. Kaviraj used to compose poems in praise of various deities and kings to earn his livelihood. Therefore, everyone called him "Kaviraj Bhat." He would recite his poems at Vishrant Ghat in Mathura.

Prasang 1 – One Day at Vishrant Ghat

One day, he was at Vishrant Ghat composing verses in praise of Bhuteshwar Mahadev. At that time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu arrived in Mathura from Mahavan. Shri Acharyaji was performing Sandhyavandan (evening prayers) at Vishrant Ghat when Kaviraj Bhat saw him.

Then Kaviraj Bhat thought, "This person appears to be a great scholar. Let me ask him something." So, Kaviraj Bhat went near Shri Acharyaji, bowed down to him, and asked a question: "Maharaj! Who is greater, Devi or Mahadev?" Then Shri Acharyaji said, "According to the scriptures, Shri Thakurji is greater. Yet, in one's heart, whichever form one firmly accepts as supreme, that one becomes greater for him."

Then Kaviraj Bhat said, "Maharaj! What is the difference between Shri Thakurji and Mahadevji? Both are called Ishwar (God)." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu replied, "In the Bhagavata Purana, it is written that when Bhagwan took the form of Mohini, Mahadev became enchanted by that form. And though Mahadev may take various forms, he can never enchant Shri Thakurji. Thus, Mahadev is under the control of Bhagwan, but Bhagwan is not under the control of Mahadev. This is the difference between them."

When Shri Acharyaji spoke these words from his divine mouth, Kaviraj Bhat heard them. His intellect immediately became purified. Then Kaviraj bowed down and humbly said, "Maharaj! Please accept

me under your protection. Because, from the very moment I sat near you and listened to your words, my mind has become absorbed in Shri Thakurji. I wish to serve you. If I spend some days in your company, surely Shri Thakurji will be pleased with me. Therefore, please make me your sevak."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "You are a poet, composing verses, how will you serve as a sevak?" Then Kaviraj replied, "Maharaj! Without your company, I have been wandering aimlessly, with no true knowledge. That is why I used to sing the glories of many deities, leaving aside Shri Thakurji. Now, please show your grace upon me so that I may always sing only the glories of Shri Thakurji." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Now I am going to Adel. You come there with your two brothers. There, I shall make you my sevak." Saying this, Shri Acharyaji departed for Adel.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that Kaviraj had past-life affection toward becoming a sevak. Only when such love exists does one receive acceptance as a sevak. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji told him to come to Adel, where he would accept him as a sevak. Then Shri Acharyaji proceeded to Adel.

Kaviraj then said to his two brothers, "Let us go to Adel and become the sevaks of Shri Acharyaji." So the three brothers went together to Adel. Within a few days, they reached there. Then Shri Acharyaji said to them, "Take a bath and come."

So all three went to bathe and then returned. Shri Acharyaji then gave the name of Kaviraj Bhat to the Lord and announced the names of the other two brothers as well. Then Kaviraj Bhat humbly asked Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! Who were we in our previous birth, and why did we forget Shri Thakurji and wander in this world?"

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "You were the chief family priest of Shri Nandarayaji. You are the one who revealed the Bhakti Sutra. This path of devotion was firmly established by you, and the world knows it through your sutras. You were the best among all sages. But one time, you became proud, thinking, 'I know the path of devotion very well.' Then Vishwamitra cursed you, saying, 'Fall to the earth and become ignorant.' Therefore, you took birth on this earth. Now, after leaving this body, you will again become the sage Shandilya."

Then Kaviraj bowed down and took leave, returning to Mathura. From there, he went to Govardhan and took the darshan of Shri Nathji. Standing before the Lord, he composed many devotional poems. Later,

he also composed numerous verses in praise of Shri Govardhannathji before Shri Acharyaji. He became deeply immersed in the nectar of divine pastimes.

Thus, Kaviraj Bhat became a true devotee of the Lord and was a great recipient of Shri Acharyaji's grace. Through his association, his two brothers were also liberated. Therefore, the story of Kaviraj is concluded here.

Varta 67 - Gopaldas of Itoda

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Gopaldas, was a Kshatriya from Itoda, living in the western region of Punjab. The sentiment of his story is being described.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play, he is Lalita's companion. In the divine realm, his name is Nritya-kala (the art of dance). Once, he became proud, thinking, "I know the art of music very well, better than any other companion of Lalitaji." When this pride arose in his heart, Lalitaji said nothing but thought, "Let this foolish one be born on the earth." Because of that offense, he was born in the west as the son of a Kshatriya. Later, when he grew up, the thought came to his mind that he should undertake the pilgrimage to Braj and perform his father's last rites at Gaya. Thinking this, he set out from the west and came to Braj. After bathing in Mathura, he went to Kashi. From Kashi, he went to Gaya, where he performed the shraddha ceremony for his father. After completing it, he returned to Kashi and from there began traveling toward Mathura again.

On the way, he met Shri Acharyaji. They both stopped in a small village for the night. That night, robbers attacked the village. Gopaldas was struck in the hand by an arrow and lost all his belongings and money.

In the morning, Shri Acharyaji asked, "Gopaldas, what news?" Then he replied, "Maharaj! All my money, clothes, and possessions have been taken away, but I am not worried about that. I can send a note from Agra and recover them from home. But I am concerned about how I will travel for the next few days without any expenses. As for the wound on my hand, it will heal soon."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "The suffering from your past actions has now been exhausted. Do not worry. Whatever money you need, take it

from Krishnadas." Then Gopaldas asked, "Maharaj! What do you mean by 'the suffering from my past actions'?"

Shri Acharyaji said, "Ten years ago, something like this happened. One night, you were traveling to a village. On the way, some other thieves were robbing people. You caught them, beat them severely, and took their goods away. What has happened now is the return of that very act. Your possessions have been taken, and you were struck by an arrow. Do you remember that?"

Then Gopaldas said, "Maharaj! Yes, it is true. This happened ten years ago." After that, he took five rupees from Krishnadas and continued his journey. Then Gopaldas thought within himself, "Shri Acharyaji is truly the Supreme Lord. He told me details of something that happened ten years ago in my own country. If I become his sevak, my life will be fulfilled."

Thinking this, he humbly said to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! Please take me under your protection by your grace, and free me from the suffering of worldly existence." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Come to Agra. There I will give you your name."

Then Gopaldas said, "Maharaj! I do not have faith that I will survive that long. What if this body leaves me in a moment — where will I find you again? When will I attain your shelter once more?"

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Go and take a bath." Gopaldas went to bathe and returned. Then Shri Acharyaji gave him his name and performed his Brahma-sambandh initiation.

Then Gopaldas humbly said, "Maharaj! I am very foolish. I do not know the way or method of your path. Please show me such mercy that the principles of the Pushti Path may become firmly established in my heart, and that I may gain some understanding of your divine form."

Then Shri Acharyaji gave him the charanamrit (holy water from his feet) and taught him the text 'Siddhant Rahasya.' Then, in Gopaldas's heart, the principles of the Pushti Path became deeply rooted, and he attained knowledge of Shri Acharyaji's divine nature.

After this, Gopaldas bowed down and composed many verses (chhand) in his praise. Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Gopaldas, you have received Shri Thakurji's grace."

Then Gopaldas bowed again and said, "Maharaj! I have never even

taken the name of Shri Thakurji. How would Shri Thakurji know me? All of this is your mercy alone — that you have accepted such a fallen one as me into your refuge and bestowed such a great gift." Shri Acharyaji, seeing Gopaldas's humility, was very pleased. Such humility is indeed what is desired in a Vaishnav.

Gopaldas then accompanied Shri Acharyaji to Agra, and later remained with him in Braj. After taking darshan of Shri Govardhandhar (the lifter of Govardhan Hill), he took leave of Shri Acharyaji and returned to Punjab, where he continued singing devotional songs and remained absorbed in divine joy.

Prasang 1 – Gopaldas's Devotional Song on Shri Acharyaji's

Appearance Day

Once, Gopaldas came to Adel to have darshan of Shri Acharyaji. It was the day of Shri Acharyaji's birth anniversary. Shri Acharyaji bathed with saffron water and was seated to perform the worship of Markandeya. At that time, Gopaldas sang this chokhara verse in Bilaval raga:

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" माधव मासे भ र वैसाके, श्रीवल्लभ ह र जनम लयो ।"

"In the month of Madhav, on the full moon of Vaisakh, Shri Vallabh Hari took birth."

छंद - प्रग टया िजन भिक्तमारग बंध जीव छुडाईयां। संसार ते जे मुक्त कीने शरन जो जन आइयां ॥। अभयदान

नशान मेले चत्त िजन ह रकों दया। गोपालदास अनन्तलीला प्रगट श्रीवल्लभ भया ॥। १॥।

Verse – He who appeared and revealed the Path of Devotion, freeing the bound souls.

He who liberated those who came to his refuge from worldly existence.

He who granted the sign of fearlessness and bestowed minds absorbed in Hari.

Gopaldas says – The infinite divine play of Shri Vallabh has been revealed. (1)

दाता मुक्ता और न दूजा, साँचा त्रभुवनराय वहां। वरह नवारणा भवजल तारणा देखत उपजे चाव जहां ॥।

छंद - देखत ह रकों चाव उपजे सकल दुःख नवार ही। जाकौ सुमरे जरे पातक कर जोर नगम पुकार ही॥

प ततपावन वरद जाको शील माधौ कर मया। 'गोपालदास' अनंतलीला प्रगट श्रीवल्लभ भया ॥। २॥।

The giver of liberation, and none other like him, the true Lord of the

three worlds.

Where separation is removed, where the ocean of worldly life is crossed, and where, on

seeing him, joy arises.

Verse – On seeing Hari, joy springs forth and all sorrows are removed.

He whose remembrance burns away sins – the Vedas cry out in praise of him.

He whose glory is to purify the fallen, whose nature is filled with the compassion of

Madhav.

Gopaldas says – The infinite divine play of Shri Vallabh has been revealed. (2)

ये ब्रजबा लयाँ गोप गुवा लयाँ ये गोकुल के लोग उहाँ। ये बन क्रीड़ा, ह रमुख बीडा ह र सेवा रस भोग वहां ।।

छंद - रसभोग और संयोग म ल यों हये अन्तर रम रह्या। तुव बाल च रत्र अनंतलीला दान दे सब गुन कह्या ॥।

तेरी भली मूर त दे ख सूर त रा धका अञ्चल गह्या। 'गोपालदास' अनंत लीला प्रगट श्रीवल्लभ भया ॥ ३ ॥।

These cowherd girls, these cowherd boys, these people of Gokul are there.

There are the forest pastimes, the offerings into Hari's mouth, and the enjoyment of the

nectar of Hari's service there.

Verse – In the bliss of divine enjoyment and union, thus the heart within delights.

Your divine childhood deeds and eternal plays have displayed all virtues.

Seeing your beautiful form, even Radhika held the edge of her veil.

Gopaldas says – The infinite divine play of Shri Vallabh has been revealed. (3)

पूरन ब्रह्म सनातन माधो क ल केशव अवतार वहां। िजन जैसा देखा तन तैसा पेखा भक्तन प्रान आधार वहां ॥|

छंद - भक्तन प्रान आधार श्रीबल्लभ हये अन्तररा खया। रामकृष्ण मुकुन्द माधो सदा िजह्वा भा खया ॥

गोपीनाथ अनाथ बंधु वेद में करुणामया। 'गोपालदास' अनंतलीला प्रगट श्रीवल्लभ भया ॥४।।

He is the complete, eternal Brahman, Madhav, the incarnation of Keshav in the age of

Kali.

As each one sees him, so does he appear to them – the very support of devotees' lives.

Verse – Shri Vallabh, the life and heart of devotees, resides within their hearts.

Rama, Krishna, Mukund, Madhav – all are spoken of as one through him.

He is Gopinath, the friend of the helpless, the compassionate one mentioned in the

Vedas.

Gopaldas says – The infinite divine play of Shri Vallabh has been revealed. (4)

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When Shri Acharyaji heard this song, he became very pleased with Gopaldas. Thus, Gopaldas became a true devotee and a special recipient of Shri Acharyaji's grace. Therefore, the story of Gopaldas is concluded here.

Varta 68 - Janardandas Chopra Kshatriya

Now, the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Janardandas Chopra Kshatriya, resident of Thanesar, is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Janardandas, in the Divine Play (Leela), is in the group of maidens (Kumarika). In the Leela, his name is 'Krishnavati'. He was born in the house of a Kshatriya in Thanesar. His father served under the ruler of Thanesar, carrying arms. That ruler went to battle against another ruler. At that time, Janardandas's father also went with weapons to fight.

Janardandas's father was very cowardly. When the war began, he became afraid and fled. He returned home. Janardandas was sixteen years old at that time. His father said, "I fled from the battlefield. The ruler will come and kill me." Then Janardandas said to his father, "You have done wrong. A Kshatriya fleeing from battle! But now it will be difficult to stay in this land." Then Janardandas's father said, "I will go east, toward Kashi." Saying this, Janardandas's father left. But instead of going east, he went south.

Here, after the father fled, the army was defeated and the ruler also ran away. Later, after the dispute ended, he returned to Thanesar. Then he asked all the soldiers, "Who fled first?" All replied, "Janardandas's father fled first." Then that ruler said, "Bring him before me." So the guards came to his house and took Janardandas away.

The ruler asked him, "Tell me where your father is. He fled from the battlefield, and because of that, my entire army was scattered. Therefore, I will punish him. If you do not tell me where he is, I will punish you." Then Janardandas said, "My father came home after fleeing. Out of fear of you, he fled toward the place called Kashi in the east. And here I stand before you. Do as you wish." The ruler said, "You are lying. You are hiding your father somewhere." Then Janardandas said, "If I am hiding him, write a record of this accusation. I am not speaking a lie."

Then the ruler had him thrown into prison. As soon as he was put in prison, that evening, a fire broke out in the ruler's house. The ruler's

son, daughter-in-law, and entire family burned and died, leaving him alone. Then the ruler thought, “I have done evil by throwing Janardandas into prison without fault. I have received the fruit of my sin.”

Then the ruler called Janardandas and said, “I punished you without guilt. Your father fled, but what was your fault in that? My entire family has been destroyed. Now you call your father back; I will not harm him. What was destined has happened. And if you do not trust me, I will put this in writing before ten respectable men of the town.”

Then the ruler called the respected merchant elders of the village and wrote a statement: “When Janardandas’s father returns home, I will make no claim against him. If I do, I shall be wrong before the council.” Then, since Janardandas’s father had much unpaid salary from his service, the ruler gave that amount to Janardandas.

Janardandas returned home and thought, “Now I must bring my father back home. What means should I use?” Then he thought, “If he is somewhere near Kashi, I shall go there and bring him. Otherwise, he will never return.” Thinking this, Janardandas left Thanesar. He reached Agra. As he left Agra and went further on the road, he found two gold coins. He picked them up and became happy, thinking, “This is a good sign, I have found gold!”

After walking two more stages ahead, he met Vasudevdas Chakda. Janardandas asked him, “Have you seen my father anywhere?” Then Vasudevdas Chakda said, “I have not seen your father. But I will tell you one thing, if you will believe me. You are a divine soul; that is why I am saying this.” Then Janardandas said, “You are the elder, my family priest. I am your client and like a child. Whatever you say, I will do.”

Then Vasudevdas said, “Since you have left home, go to Shri Gokul Mathura. There, you will have the darshan of Shri Acharyaji. Take refuge in him. You have suffered greatly in the world. Now become the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu and attain fulfillment. Why wander toward Kashi? Your father has gone south. He will die there within a month. Therefore, do as I say.”

Then Janardandas asked, “How do you know that my father has gone south and will die there within a month? Who knows the future?” Then Vasudevdas said, “By the grace of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, I know the events of time. You were happy upon finding the two gold coins. But those coins will bring you great sorrow. Therefore, give

them away to some Brahmin. Just as I knew about the coins, I also know of your father's death. Now do as your heart wishes."

Then Janardandas firmly believed that whatever Vasudevdas said was true. He bowed to Vasudevdas and said, "I will surely become the sevak of Shri Acharyaji."

Prasang 1 – Janardandas's Meeting with Shri Acharyaji and

His Devotion

So, Janardandas went from there to Mathura and reached Shri Gokul. There, he had the darshan of Shri Acharyaji and bowed down to him. In his mind, he thought, "Those two gold coins I found—where will I find another Brahmin to give them to? Let me offer them to Shri Acharyaji." Then he took out the two gold coins and offered them to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji said, "You are very foolish. You found these coins on the road and have offered them to me as a gift. I do not need them."

Then Janardandas again bowed and prayed, "Maharaj, you are the Supreme Purushottam. Vasudevdas told me on the road that Shri Acharyaji is the Lord Himself. Take refuge in him. These coins are not for me—they are sources of sorrow. Therefore, please accept me under your shelter and give these coins to whomever they belong."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Pick up the coins. In Mathura, there are many Chaube Brahmins; give them to one of them. And come with me to have darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. There, you shall become a sevak." Then Janardandas took the two coins and went with Shri Acharyaji to Govardhan. Later, when they arrived in Anyor, Shri Acharyaji said, "Janardandas, bathe and come for darshan of Shri Govardhannathji."

Then Janardandas bathed and went with Shri Acharyaji for the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. Shri Acharyaji seated him before Shri Govardhandhar and made him offer his name (initiation). Afterward, he said, "Now serve the Lord." Then Janardandas said, "Whatever way you instruct, I will serve." Then Shri Acharyaji gave him the service of the pag (turban) of Shri Nathji.

For ten days, Janardandas stayed in Anyor with Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, learning the methods of the path. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Janardandas, "Now I will go on pilgrimage around the earth. You return home and serve the Lord with full devotion." Then Janardandas took the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji, bowed to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, and returned to his home in Thanesar.

Later, news came from the south that his father had died. Then

Janardandas thought, “Vasudevdas is a great devotee of God. Whatever he said was all true.” Thereafter, he fixed his mind on serving the Lord with devotion. In a short time, Shri Thakurji began to show him loving grace.

Vasudevdas from Singhnaṇḍ used to come to Thanesar. Janardandas would lovingly host him in his home, saying, “By your grace, I have found refuge in Shri Acharyaji. Therefore, whenever you come to Thanesar, this house is yours, stay here.”

Thus, through association with a Vaishnav, Janardandas became devoted to God. Therefore, one should keep company with Bhagavadiyas (devotees of the Lord). Janardandas was such a blessed devotee, a recipient of Shri Acharyaji’s grace. Up to this point, the story of Janardandas is told.

Varta 69 - Gadu Swami Sanaudhiya

Now, the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Gadu Swami, a Sanaudhiya Brahmin who lived in Shri Vrindavan, is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the Divine Play (Leela), he was a maidservant in the house of Shri Nandarayaji. Her name was Bandi. When Yashodaji began to tie Shri Thakurji during the Damodar Leela, this Bandi gave Yashodaji a rope. Hearing this, Rohiniji cursed her, saying, "You are a maidservant; why did you give your own rope to Yashodaji to bind Shri Thakurji?" Because of this curse, she fell to the earth and was born in Mathura in the house of a Sanaudhiya Brahmin.

When she (he, now in human birth) was eight years old, he already showed signs of detachment. He left Mathura and came alone to live in Vrindavan. From Mathura, he would bring some food and necessities for ten or fifteen days, and sit at Keshi Ghat in Vrindavan, reflecting, "When will grace come upon me?" When Brajvasis or others would come and ask him to serve them, he would do so. To them, he would always say, "Keep the name of Shri Thakurji constantly on your lips."

Prasang 1 – The Vision and Refuge of Gadu Swami

One night, Gadu Swami felt deep separation and anguish. He thought, "My entire life has passed away, and this human body has gone in vain; therefore, my life is wasted." Saying this, tears flowed from his eyes. Then, sleep came upon Gadu Swami. In his dream, Shri Thakurji said, "Tomorrow morning, Shri Vallabhacharyaji will come to Keshi Ghat to bathe. Go and take refuge in him. Then grace will come upon you."

When Gadu Swami awoke, he said to himself, "When will morning come, that I may go to Shri Acharyaji's refuge?" Soon morning arrived. That very night, Shri Acharyaji had departed from Giriraj and, at dawn, reached Keshi Ghat, where he bathed in Shri Yamunaji and was performing Sandhyavandan. Then Gadu Swami asked, "Who is he?" Krishnadas Megha replied, "This is Shri Vallabhacharyaji, who has come from Giriraj."

Then Gadu Swami bowed down and said to Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! Please have mercy upon me and make me your sevak.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “You are called a Swami, and yet you serve others. Why do you say you want to become a sevak?” Then Gadu Swami said, “Maharaj, I have received the divine command: ‘Become the sevak of Shri Acharyaji, and then grace will come upon you.’ Therefore, please accept me as your sevak.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said to Gadu Swami, “Go and bathe.” Gadu Swami bathed and returned to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji gave him the initiation by teaching him the divine Name. After that, Gadu Swami presented to Shri Acharyaji the names of all those whom he himself had previously made his sevaks.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Later, Gadu Swami humbly prayed to Shri Acharyaji, saying, “Maharaj! My parents are turned away from devotion and live in Mathura. Therefore, I have left them and come here. I am unmarried and have lived in a state of renunciation since childhood. Now please bless me so that my mind never strays away from the Leelas of Shri Thakurji.”

Then Shri Acharyaji gave him his own Charanamrit (water sanctified by his feet) and composed for him a ‘Trividha Naamavali’ (threefold name formula) and instructed him to recite it. After that, Gadu Swami began to experience the Leelas of Shri Thakurji and became deeply absorbed in mental (manasi) seva.

Thus, Gadu Swami was such a blessed devotee and recipient of Shri Acharyaji’s grace that his story is indescribable. The manner of his manasi devotion cannot be expressed in words. Therefore, the story of Gadu Swami is not told in further detail.

Varta 70 - Kanhaiya Shal Kshatriya

Now, the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Kanhaiyashal Kshatriya, who lived in Agra, is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Kanhaiya Shal is, in the Divine Play (Leela), is the friend of Lalitaji. There his name is 'Kamadini'. He was born in Agra in the house of a 'Shal' Kshatriya. Earlier, there was great scarcity of wealth. On the very day Kanhaiya Shal was born, wealth emerged from the earth in the parents' house. Then his father and mother said, "This son is very fortunate, Lakshmi came at the very moment of his birth." Therefore, they named the child Kanhaiya Shal. In this way, the parents loved Kanhaiya Shal very much. He grew up, but they did not allow him to go outside the house. When he turned thirteen, his father passed away. Afterward, Kanhaiya Shal said to his mother, "Now let me go out. I have grown up; Mathura is a great holy place, and I have never had darshan." Then the mother said, "Son, do not go out of my sight anywhere." Kanhaiya Shal kept quiet.

After that, Kanhaiya Shal had an uncle. He set out for Mathura. Then Kanhaiya Shal said to his mother, "Now let me go with uncle to bathe in Mathura. Otherwise, I will run away alone." Then the mother became afraid and said to her brother, "Do not show too much darshan to my son, do not make him roam around. Bathe him in Mathura and bring him back quickly. If you have to do a pilgrimage in Braj and roam, first bring my son back home to me and then go again." Then Kanhaiya Shal came to Mathura and bathed at Vishram Ghat. Then Kanhaiya Shal said to his uncle, "Take me for darshan all over Braj." His uncle said, "Your mother did not permit this." Then Kanhaiya Shal said, "My mother is very attached to me. But when will I come again? Therefore, let us go and take darshan of Braj," and thus they set out to do the forest circumambulation.

In five days they reached Shri Govardhan. Seeing Giriraj, Kanhaiya Shal became bewildered. He would not speak when called, would not rise when lifted. He smiled at whoever he saw. If someone put food in his mouth, he ate it. Whatever clothes were put on him, he wore. In this way, he forgot awareness of his body. Then his uncle was greatly troubled. "If I take him home in this condition, his mother will weep." Therefore, the uncle stayed at Govardhan with Kanhaiya Shal. He said

to renunciates, ascetics, and physicians, “Whoever makes Kanhaiya Shal well, I will give him whatever he asks.” Many people administered medicines. Many spells and rituals were performed. But Kanhaiya Shal did not get well.

Thus a month passed. Then at home the mother became very anxious: “There is no news of my son. My brother left saying he would be gone four days; now a month has passed. What is the reason?” Then she summoned a man and said, “Go to Mathura. My brother and son went to Braj, find out where they are, what they are doing, and how they are. Bring back all the news. Do not reveal my anxiety to them. If you come back and tell me everything, I will give you ten rupees.” Then that man went. He got news in Mathura, went to see both of them at Govardhan, and came back to Agra. He said to Kanhaiya Shal’s mother, “Your son has become deranged. He has no awareness of his body. Your brother is doing many spells and rituals, and giving medicines.” Then the mother was very distressed: “It was for this reason that I did not let my son go outside. What shall I do now?” Then she said to that man, “Hire a palanquin. You come with me; I will give you ten more rupees. Take me to my son.”

That man hired a palanquin. Then the mother traveled in a palanquin worth a thousand rupees. She came to Govardhan, went to her son, pressed him to her heart, and wept. After that, she scolded her brother and sent him away: “You have made my son deranged.” Then that mother called many learned men, but Kanhaiya Shal did not get well. Then she asked all the Brajvasis at Govardhan, “Tell me of such a great person who can make my son well. I will live as his maidservant.” At that time, Sadu Pandey came to Govardhan from Anyor. She asked him. Then Sadu Pandey said, “In our village, Shri Acharyaji has arrived. He has given recognition to many Brajvasis and taken them into refuge. From Govardhan mountain, he has manifested Shri Govardhannathji. Shri Acharyaji is God Himself. If it comes into his mind, then what is this matter?” “But do not take my name before Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu,” he added. Then the old woman said, “Take me to your village; I will make a request.” Then Sadu Pandey said, “Come with me. I am going back to my village.”

Then the mother seated Kanhaiya Shal in the palanquin and came to Anyor. In a Brajvasi’s house, she seated Kanhaiya Shal there and placed a curtain at the door. After that, she came and bowed to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji said, “We know, old woman, on whose account you have come. Therefore, bring your son here quickly; we will make him well. Do not talk too much.” Then the old woman brought Kanhaiya Shal to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji took water in

his hand from a sprinkler, recited Vedic mantras, and sprinkled it over Kanhaiya Shal. Kanhaiya Shal became alert. Then he bowed to Shri Acharyaji and prayed, “Maharaj! I was very happy, absorbed in the Leela of Braj and Govardhan. Why did you bring me out from there? You have manifested to give greater gifts. Why did you do this?” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “The overflowing love that rises to the surface will flow away one day. Therefore I made you alert. Let there be steady love within; let there be experience of the nectar of Leela, which no one in the world knows. Such love is never destroyed.” Then Kanhaiya Shal prayed, “Maharaj! Please bestow the gift of steady love.” Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu bathed Kanhaiya Shal, seated him before Shri Govardhannathji, and performed name-initiation. He made him directly experience the nectar of Shri Thakurji’s Leela. Afterward, he gave name-initiation to Kanhaiya Shal’s mother as well. All the small texts that Shri Acharyaji had composed, he taught them all to Kanhaiya Shal. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Kanhaiya Shal, “Now go home and experience the nectar. Now the worldly and Vedic obstacles will not hinder you.” Then Kanhaiya Shal’s mother offered a gift of one thousand rupees and prayed, “Maharaj! You have shown me great mercy. You are Purushottam Himself. Without you, who would have made my son well?” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Now take your son and go to your home.” Then Kanhaiya Shal’s mother requested Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! Please visit my house in Agra once; there is a great offering for you. Kindly accept and sanctify my home.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “When we come to Adel, we will come to your house. Now you go home.” Then Kanhaiya Shal and the old woman bowed, took leave of Shri Acharyaji, and came to Agra. Kanhaiya Shal remained absorbed in Leela. And the old woman did all the household work.

Later, when Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came to Agra, he stayed at Kanhaiya Shal’s house. He established in Kanhaiya Shal’s heart the meanings of all the texts, the sentiments of the Leelas, and the principles of the Path of Grace. He stayed five nights. Then the old woman offered a great gift, and with that he went to Adel.

Prasang 1 – Gusainji Seeks Acharyaji’s Texts from Kanhaiya

Shal

So Shri Gusainji asked Shri Akka ji, “The account of the Path, this we know from Damodardas. But where can we find Shri Acharyaji’s texts?” Then Shri Akka ji said, “In Agra, Kanhaiya Shal Kshatriya has

the texts, get them from there." Then Shri Gusainji came to the house of Kanhaiya Shal Kshatriya. Kanhaiya Shal welcomed Shri Gusainji with supreme love. After that, Shri Gusainji read all of Shri Acharyaji's texts with Kanhaiya Shal. Then Shri Gusainji wrote commentaries on the texts and graciously taught them to Kanhaiya Shal. And Shri Gusainji had composed his own texts—Dana Leela, Hullas, Vratacharya, and other secret works and he taught them to Kanhaiya Shal. And Shri Gusainji did not allow Kanhaiya Shal to bow to him, saying, "Shri Acharyaji resides in your heart." In this way, by the extreme grace of Shri Acharyaji and Shri Gusainji, Kanhaiya Shal remained absorbed in the two rasas of Leela, union and separation. Thereafter, Shri Gusainji went to Adel.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Afterward, Kanhaiya Shal's mother passed away. Then Kanhaiya Shal said, "This obstacle too is removed. Moment by moment, she used to impose restrictions on eating and drinking." From then on, when Kanhaiya Shal remembered his body, he would eat and drink; otherwise, he would sit just as he was.

Prasang 2 – Kanhaiya Shal's Journey to Dwarka and Miraculous Guidance

Later, at one time, Shri Gusainji came to Agra from Adel and stayed at Kanhaiya Shal's house. Then he said to Kanhaiya Shal, "I will go to Dwarka." Kanhaiya Shal said, "I will come afterward and have your darshan." Then Shri Gusainji said, "How will you come? You do not talk to non Vaishnavs; the path is far." Then Kanhaiya Shal said, "Why would I need to speak with others? I will come after you." Then Shri Gusainji said, "You have the strength of grace; do as you wish."

After that, for two days, Shri Gusainji spoke with Kanhaiya Shal about Shri Acharyaji's texts. Then he departed for Dwarka. One day, it came to Kanhaiya Shal's mind, "Let me go to Dwarka and meet Shri Gusainji." So he set out; the road was not clear. He did not speak to anyone. Three days passed like this, and he came out into the forest. There the forest was dense, with no water. Then he thought, "This body will perish." Then he sat down under a tree and began to recite from Shri Acharyaji's texts. Meanwhile, a cowherd came and said, "Why are you sitting here? There is the fear of snakes and tigers." Then Kanhaiya Shal said, "I am the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. So snakes and tigers will not come near me." Then the cowherd said, "There is a pond behind you, drink some water." Then he looked back and saw it full of water. He started drinking the water.

Then another cowherd brought Shri Nathji's mahaprasad, sakadi and anasakadi and said, "Take this mahaprasad." Then Kanhaiya Shal said, "Where is this mahaprasad from? I will take it home, either from my own place or from where Shri Gusainji is. I do not take mahaprasad from anyone else's hand." Then the cowherd said, "This is Shri Nathji's mahaprasad. Have you come out to commit an offense to Shri Ranchhodji? Why such insistence?" Then he looked at the mahaprasad and, recognizing it as Shri Nathji's, bowed to it and took it.

After this, a third cowherd came and said, "Why are you sitting here? Go for the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji." Then he turned and looked back and could see the temple of Shri Ranchhodji. Then Kanhaiya Shal said, "If Shri Gusainji has arrived there, then I will go." Then the cowherd said, "Shri Gusainji has sent me to give you this message. So go quickly." Then Kanhaiya Shal went to the temple of Shri Ranchhodji, to Shri Gusainji. Then Shri Gusainji himself said, "Kanhaiya Shal has come. Did you speak with anyone on the way?" Then Kanhaiya Shal said, "Maharaj! Why would I need to speak with anyone else?" Then Shri Gusainji said, "You spoke with three cowherds; why do you say this?" Then Kanhaiya Shal said, "Maharaj! My speech does not go to anyone else except you. The forms of those three cowherds, who else in the forest would have given me sakadi and anasakadi mahaprasad? And how would I take it from another's hand? All this is your grace." Then Shri Gusainji took Kanhaiya Shal by the hand and showed him the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. Thus Kanhaiya Shal had darshan of Shri Govardhandhar. Then Shri Gusainji said to Kanhaiya Shal, "You have had the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji." Then Kanhaiya Shal said, "By your grace, Shri Govardhandhar is before my eyes." Thus he had the darshan of Shri Govardhandhar.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here it is shown that Kanhaiya Shal's mind does not go anywhere except to the Braj Leela.

Then Shri Gusainji brought Kanhaiya Shal to his camp and said, "Now come with us to Agra." Then Kanhaiya Shal said, "Maharaj! You have come to accept the divine life; it will delay you. And I like being alone very much. Therefore, by your grace, I will reach Agra." Then Shri Gusainji said, "You have the strength of Shri Acharyaji's grace. Whatever you do will be right for you."

After that, Kanhaiya Shal took permission from Shri Gusainji and set out for Agra. In God-absorption, two days passed. Then dense thickets came ahead; he could not find the path. There he sat under a tree. There he began to look at Shri Acharyaji's texts, Shri Gusainji's

commentaries, and the secret works. Then a cowherd came and said, “Why are you sitting here? If you need to bathe in Shri Yamunaji or drink water, do so and then go to your home.” Then Kanhaiya Shal’s eyes were on the book itself; he lifted his gaze and saw Shri Yamunaji and the city of Agra. Then he bathed in Shri Yamunaji, drank water, performed recitation and worship, and came home.

After that, within a few days, Shri Gusainji himself came to Agra from Dwarka. Then he asked Kanhaiya Shal, “On the day you came to Agra, how did you arrive?” Then Kanhaiya Shal said, “I do not know. You yourself took me to Dwarka and you yourself brought me to Agra, this much I know.” Then Shri Gusainji, pleased, stayed three days at Kanhaiya Shal’s house. He spoke divine talks and became very happy. After that, Shri Gusainji went to Adel. As for Kanhaiya Shal, he did worldly and Vedic duties when he had awareness of the body; otherwise, he had no awareness. He remained absorbed in the nectar of Leela. Such are Kanhaiya Shal’s ways that go against worldly and Vedic norms, they cannot be described.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): It is said, people who do not know the sentiments of Shri Thakurji’s Leela cannot have faith in this. Therefore, it is not expounded. The way of love is peculiar. Thus Surdasji has sung:

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(राग केदारो | Raga Sarang)

ब्रज लीला कोऊ पार न पायो । ब्रह्मा, शेष, महेस, नारायण म त ही भुलायो ॥१॥

No one can fathom the Braj Leela. Brahma, Shesha, Mahesh, Narayan—their minds

became confused. □1□

वेद स्मृ त सु न ह र ही मलन बहु मारग बतायो । गोपीजन नज मारग “सुर” न्यारो दखरायो ॥२॥

Having heard the Vedas and Smritis, many paths to meet Hari were told. The Gopis

showed, “Sur,” their own distinct path. □2□

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Therefore, Kanhaiya Shal is such a Bhagavadiya, a recipient of Shri Acharyaji’s grace. Up to this point, his story is told.

Varta 71 - Narharadas Gaudiya

Now the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Narharadas, a Gaudiya Brahmin from Bengal, is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Narharadas appeared in Bengal. In the divine play, he is among the group of young maidens (kumarikas). There, his name is Sugandhara. When he grew older, his love and devotion became deeply attached to Shri Jagannathrayaji. For one full year he remained absorbed in the service of Shri Jagannathrayaji, and afterward returned home. Then his father said, "My son, I have now become old. You do not go to serve your patrons anymore. After I die, how will you earn your food? You keep going again and again for the darshan of Shri Jagannathrayaji. Does Shri Jagannathrayaji give you anything?"

Narharadas replied, "Shri Jagannathrayaji gives to the whole world; He also gives to me. From now on, please do not give me any money or support. Let me see whether Shri Jagannathrayaji takes care of me or not."

Then Narharadas's father said, "If Shri Jagannathrayaji gives to everyone, then why does He accept offerings and worship? Everyone takes from Him, but there is no Lord who gives. When I give you money for expenses, then you go for the darshan of Shri Jagannathrayaji. If I do not give, then you will have to beg. When I stop giving, how will you go?"

Hearing this, Narharadas became very angry. He said to his father, "You are a blasphemer of the Lord. Therefore, from today onward, I will neither take anything from you nor live in your house. It is not proper even to see your face. You have spoken such words that even an outcast would not say such things." Saying this, he left home.

Then his father tried to persuade him much and even begged forgiveness, saying, "I have made a mistake." But Narharadas was a divine soul and could not bear to hear criticism of Shri Thakurji. He kept visiting Shri Jagannathrayaji for darshan, though he had nothing with him.

Then he went and sat on the shore of the ocean, thinking in his mind, "Now I will not ask anyone for anything. If I live by begging, and my

father hears of it, he will say, 'What I said came true.' Therefore, I will eat only if Shri Jagannathrayaji Himself gives it to me. If not, then whatever is destined shall happen."

Later that night, a boy about sixteen years old came, bringing Shri Jagannathrayaji's Mahaprasad, and said, "O Brahmin! Take this Mahaprasad." Narharadas replied, "How can I disrespect Mahaprasad? Leave it here. But I will accept it only if Shri Jagannathrayaji Himself gives it to me. This is my firm resolve."

Then the boy said, "Shri Jagannathrayaji Himself is giving it to you. Who else gives? Without His will, who would come here to give it to you?" Hearing this, Narharadas became pleased and accepted the Mahaprasad. The boy then departed. Afterward, Narharadas slept. In his dream, Shri Jagannathrayaji appeared and said, "Tomorrow morning, go to Shri Acharyaji. Become his sevak. All your wishes will be fulfilled."

Narharadas said, "But I do not know Shri Acharyaji. Where should I go?" Shri Jagannathrayaji replied, "Shri Vallabhacharyaji is famous. If you ask anyone, they will tell you about him. Know that Shri Acharyaji is my very own form." In the morning, Narharadas woke up and, asking people along the way, went to Shri Acharyaji, bowed down to him, and did dandvat pranam.

Shri Acharyaji said, "Come, Narharadas! You have firm resolve indeed, that you even left your father for the sake of faith. Earlier, even Prahlad did not speak against his father. Therefore, your name 'Narharadas' is truly appropriate. You are a divine soul of Pushtimarg, supremely exalted." Then Narharadas understood that Shri Acharyaji was the Lord Himself, for He had spoken everything that his father had said. Narharadas then prayed, "Maharaj! Please make me your sevak."

Shri Acharyaji said, "At present your heart is still attached to wealth. Therefore, the divine name of the Lord will not bear fruit for you yet. Go and sit by the seashore. In the waves of the sea, you will find wealth. With that wealth, fulfill the wish you had in your mind for Shri Jagannathrayaji. Afterward, I will grant you refuge. Then worldly sorrows and obstacles will not touch you."

Narharadas said, "Maharaj! My mind is very attached to wealth. But what can I do? If my father hears that I have obtained wealth, he will feel ashamed, knowing that Shri Jagannathrayaji is indeed such a gracious Lord." Shri Acharyaji said, "Go. On the seashore, your wish

will be fulfilled."

Narharadas went where no one else was and sat by the seashore. Suddenly, heaps of gold, silver, diamonds, pearls, and other treasures appeared before him from the waves. He tied the wealth into bundles, felt joy in his heart, and went to Shri Acharyaji to show it, saying, "Maharaj! By your grace I have obtained much wealth." Shri Acharyaji said, "Now go and fulfill your wish for Shri Jagannathrayaji."

Narharadas said, "Maharaj! If I take this wealth and spend it, people who know me as poor will think I have stolen it. If the king punishes me, what shall I do?" Shri Acharyaji said, "Take my name; no one will punish you." Narharadas said, "Maharaj! Please keep some part of this with you." Shri Acharyaji said, "This is the wealth of Shri Jagannathrayaji. Use it for His wish. It is not for our use. We only accept wages earned honestly by our sevaks."

Then Narharadas called goldsmiths, tailors, and cloth merchants. He prepared various garments, ornaments, cooking materials, and other offerings for Shri Jagannathrayaji. He made sure that no one in the village went hungry and gave wealth to the Brahmins. Everything was put to good use. People wondered, "Earlier Narharadas was poor. From where did he bring such wealth?"

To whoever asked, Narharadas replied, "Shri Acharyaji has given it for performing Shri Jagannathrayaji's wish." When the king heard of this, he came and asked, "From where did you obtain such wealth?" Narharadas replied, "Shri Acharyaji gave it to fulfill Shri Jagannathrayaji's wish." Then the king went to Shri Acharyaji and asked. Shri Acharyaji confirmed, "Yes, I said that the wealth should be used for Shri Thakurji's service." The king could not understand the divine mystery of Shri Acharyaji. He thought that Shri Acharyaji must have personally given the wealth and went home.

Later, Narharadas's father heard that his son was performing grand offerings worth thousands. He went to meet him. Narharadas turned his back toward his father and said, "You are a blasphemer of Shri Thakurji. I will not look upon your face. See how much wealth Shri Jagannathrayaji has given me! Whoever has firm faith in the Lord, everything becomes accomplished for him. One who has no faith in Shri Thakurji is unhappy in this life and corrupted in the next. But since you are my father, I offer something to you as dedication to Shri Jagannathrayaji."

He gave his father goods worth one thousand rupees and said, “After today, do not show me your face.” The father took the wealth and went home. After a few days, the wealth was spent, and Narharadas fulfilled all his wishes. Then he came to Shri Acharyaji, bowed down, and prayed, “Maharaj! Please have mercy and grant me refuge. Now my mind has no attachment to anything. I only wish to surrender to you.” Shri Acharyaji said, “Go and bathe, then come back.”

Narharadas bathed and returned. Shri Acharyaji gave him initiation, recited the Name, and made him offer his formal submission. Then a divine understanding of the Path of Grace (Pushtimarg) arose in Narharadas’s heart.

He bowed again and said, “Maharaj! I have done a very wrong act. I took the Lord’s wealth and used it to display my own greatness. I am a great sinner; even while serving Shri Thakurji, I acted with selfishness and ignorance. I am to be blamed. Taking the Lord’s wealth to serve the Lord—this too I did for my own fame. Now I surrender to you. Please tell me the way so that my next life may be purified and Shri Thakurji may bestow His grace.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Serve Shri Thakurji.” Narharadas prayed, “Maharaj! Please install Shri Thakurji in my home.” Shri Acharyaji said, “Go again to the seashore. There you will find the divine form of the Lord. Bring it.” Narharadas went again to the same place by the sea. From the waves appeared the two divine forms together (the divine couple). The forms came floating on the water and stopped before him. Narharadas brought them to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu.

Shri Acharyaji bathed the divine forms in Panchamrit and, after performing worship, named Them Shri Madan Mohanji, and placed Them on Narharadas’s head. Then Narharadas prayed to Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! My father is worldly-minded. I should not return home. Also, in this place my fame has spread in worldly ways. I cannot perform pure service here. Many of my patrons and acquaintances are in Kashi. If you permit, I will go there to serve the Lord.”

Shri Acharyaji said, “That land is best where the service of the Lord can be performed properly. I too will soon go south to Kashi. You go directly there.” Later, Shri Acharyaji went toward the south, and Narharadas came to Kashi. There, with deep devotion, he began serving Shri Madan Mohanji. After some time, Shri Madan Mohanji began to express affection and divine grace toward him.

Prasang 1 – The Later Years of Narharadas

Narharadas served Shri Madan Mohanji for many years with great devotion. In time, his body became old and weak, and he was unable to continue the service physically. Then he brought Shri Madan Mohanji to Shri Gokul, bowed to Shri Gusainji, and presented Shri Madan Mohanji to him. Shri Gusainji placed Shri Madan Mohanji near Shri Gokulchandramaji, where they now sit together on separate thrones.

After that, Narharadas took birth again in Braj, where he lived performing mental service (manasi seva) with full devotion throughout his life. Thus ends the story of Narharadas, the divine sevak and recipient of Shri Acharyaji's grace.

Varta 72 - Narhar Sanyasi

Now the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Narhar Sanyasi, a Gaud Brahmin. His father had gone from Agra to Gujarat, and this is the account of Narhar Sanyasi's life.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Narhar Sanyasi, in the divine play, is Shrutirupa, the daughter of Gopa Mansukha. Her name in the divine play was "Gulabi." Gulabi had a friend named "Paudari." She was born as Veni Kothari in Gujarat.

Once there was a famine in Agra. Then Narhar Sanyasi's father left Agra with his family and went to live in Gujarat. There Narhar Sanyasi was born. When he became fifteen years old, he came into the company of a sanyasi and became a sanyasi himself. For twelve years he performed austerities. In the summer, he endured the heat of five fires. In the rainy season, he stood under streams of water on his head. In the cold season, he would sit in water early in the morning.

Narhar Sanyasi became highly respected in Gujarat. Many people became his sevaks. Among them, Veni Kothari also became his sevak. When Narhar Sanyasi saw a woman, he would cover his face with cloth. He lived in such a state of renunciation. He built a place to stay in solitude by the bank of the Mahi River, where there was no village nearby; the nearest village was two kos (four miles) away.

In that village, there was a family of oil pressers who had no children. The wife of that oil presser thought, "Narhar Sanyasi is a great holy man. If he gives me some medicine, I will have a son." But since he never looked at a woman's face, she wondered how to approach him.

One evening, after cooking sweet puris made of wheat and milk (called seera-puri), she came to Narhar Sanyasi. Covering her face with a cloth, she called out to him. Narhar Sanyasi came and asked, "Who are you?" She said, "I am the oil presser's wife. I have brought you some seera-puri. Since you do not look at women, I have covered my face."

Narhar Sanyasi said, "I am hungry today, but your affection is great that you came two kos just to bring this for me." He accepted it. The oil presser's wife was pleased that he took it. The next day, again in the evening, she brought seera-puri. Then Narhar Sanyasi said, "Now

there is no one here; you may uncover your face." So the oil presser's wife uncovered her face and gave him the offering. After that, she began coming every evening at the same time. This continued for ten to twelve days.

One day, when she brought seera-puri, she went inside Narhar Sanyasi's hut. At that very time, the governor of Gujarat, having heard of Narhar Sanyasi's greatness, came to meet him. The oil presser's wife hid inside the hut. The governor spent the night at Narhar Sanyasi's place.

In the morning, the oil presser came to Narhar Sanyasi and said, "My daughter-in-law came here yesterday evening to bring you seera-puri. She has not returned home since. Why did you keep her? You do not even look at women!"

Narhar Sanyasi replied, "She did not come here." The oil presser said, "She went into your house and did not come out!" Then he searched Narhar Sanyasi's hut and found her hiding inside. Seeing this, the governor became very angry. He ordered Narhar Sanyasi's hut to be torn down and told him to leave the country.

Then Narhar Sanyasi went to Braj. He thought in his mind, "Association with women is so bad. If one associates with them, even the next life is ruined. The Lord has given me punishment for that." He roamed in Braj in repentance.

Later, when Veni Kothari heard that Narhar Sanyasi was in Braj, he thought, "It has been many years. Narhar Sanyasi is my guru. I will go to Braj and meet him." So Veni Kothari came from Gujarat to Braj and met Narhar Sanyasi in Vrindavan. They would sit and talk.

One day, Shri Acharyaji came to Vrindavan. Narhar Sanyasi saw him and said to Veni Kothari, "Look! What a radiant man has arrived!" Veni Kothari said, "Let us stay with him for some days. Then we will know his true nature." Narhar Sanyasi agreed, "Let's go together and stay with him."

Both of them went to Shri Acharyaji, bowed down, and humbly said, "Maharaj! Our hearts wish to stay with you for four nights. If you are pleased, please give us permission to stay with you."

Shri Acharyaji said, "I am planning to go to Dwarika. If you wish, you both may come along." So Narhar Sanyasi and Veni Kothari went with him. On the way, Narhar Sanyasi asked Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj, I have a doubt in my mind. Which path is greater – the path of

renunciation (sanyas dharma) or the path of devotion (Vaishnav dharma)?"

Shri Acharyaji said, "Each is distinct. In this Kali Yuga, it is very difficult to perfect the path of sanyas. After accepting sanyas, if even once the mind turns away from Narayana, then the merit of all lifetimes of sanyas is destroyed. But in the path of devotion, even if one becomes corrupted by bad company, the seed of devotion never dies. When one again attains the company of saints, devotion grows once more. This is stated in the Shrimad Bhagavatam.

Jad Bharat was delayed in liberation for three births due to attachment with a deer, yet ultimately attained perfection. Chitraketu, after being cursed by Parvati and becoming the demon Vritrasura, still advanced in devotion. Such is the difference.

And in this Kali Yuga, even the utterance of the Lord's name purifies everyone, even the lowest born. Reflect on this. You performed austerities and followed the dharma of sanyas, but did you attain any true realization?" Then Narhar Sanyasi bowed and said humbly, "Maharaj, please redeem me as you wish. I have found only suffering in all other paths, and my mind has not become pure."

Shri Acharyaji said, "You are a sanyasi, worshiped by the world, and people serve you as sevaks. But to become a sevak, one must adopt the mood of a das (servant). You are in the position of a master – how can you become a sevak while holding that position? Therefore, give up the position of master, and take refuge. Then the Vaishnav path will flourish in you."

Narhar Sanyasi said, "Maharaj! I now give up the position of master. I am now your sevak. Whatever command you give, I will obey." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Shave your head and beard, remove the saffron robes, and wear white garments. Then you will become a sevak." So Narhar Sanyasi shaved his matted hair and beard, bathed, and came wearing white clothes.

Shri Acharyaji said, "Today, observe a fast. Purify all your senses. Tomorrow, I will give you a name and initiate you." Narhar Sanyasi fasted. The next day, Shri Acharyaji gave him a name and made him offer the initiation offering (nivedan).

Prasang 1 – Naming of Narhar Sanyasi and Veni Kothari

Then Narhar Sanyasi humbly said to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, “Maharaj! Please also give a name to Veni Kothari.” So Shri Acharyaji bathed Veni Kothari and initiated him with a name as well. Then Narhar Sanyasi said, “Maharaj! You made me observe a fast before initiation, but not Veni Kothari. Why so?”

Shri Acharyaji said, “You held the position of a master and performed many religious and ritual acts. Your mind was scattered in many directions. But he is a householder, who knows the troubles of household life, and does not know much about rituals or religious practices. Therefore, I did not make him observe a fast.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This reveals that those who have followed other paths, studied many scriptures, and practiced much yoga and austerity, do not easily attain devotion. But one who is simple and without deceit attains devotion quickly through the company of saints.

Then Narhar Sanyasi became a great recipient of divine grace, and Veni Kothari too became a deeply devoted soul. Both remained ever absorbed in meditation upon the Lord. Later, when Shri Acharyaji went to Dwarika for the circumambulation of the earth, Veni Kothari stayed for some time in Dwarika with Narhar Sanyasi, then returned to Gujarat to his home. Narhar Sanyasi continued to wander in holy places.

Prasang 2 – Understanding the True Sanyas in Bhakti Path

Once, while wandering, Narhar Sanyasi came to Badrikashram. There, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was also present. Narhar Sanyasi saw him and humbly said, “Maharaj! Earlier, I had accepted sanyas, and later, by your grace, I came into the path of devotion. I know the kind of sanyas in the worldly path, but I do not know how sanyas works in the path of bhakti. Please, out of compassion, explain it to me.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “I will tell you the true meaning of sanyas in the path of bhakti.” Shri Acharyaji then composed the Sanyas Nirnaya scripture and taught it to Narhar Sanyasi, explaining its meaning. Then, the principle of the Pushti (Grace) Path became firmly established in Narhar Sanyasi’s heart. He began to experience the divine pastimes of Shri Thakurji, and his mind became absorbed in them.

Later, Shri Acharyaji went further on his travels, while Narhar

Sanyasi, immersed in the bliss of Swarupanand (divine self-realization), continued to wander. Thus, Narhar Sanyasi was a deeply beloved and grace-filled devotee of Shri Acharyaji. Here, his story concludes.

Varta 73 - Sadu Pandey

Now, the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevaks Sadu Pandey, Sadu Pandey's daughter-in-law Bhavani, and his daughter Naro is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): They lived in Aniyor, at the foot of Shri Giriraj. In the divine play (Leela), Sadu Pandey was the cowherd Chandra Bhan, the brother of Vrishbhanuji. Naro and Bhavani were 'Ramade' and 'Shyamade', the sisters-in-law of Yashodaji. They were revealed as such.

Prasang 1 – The Manifestation of Shri Govardhandhar in

Aniyor

When Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was doing the parikrama of the earth and reached the southern region of Jharkhand, Shri Govardhannathji appeared before Shri Acharyaji there and said, "If you reveal my seva (worship) in this world, then divine souls will quickly take refuge. I have manifested on the Govardhan Mountain in Braj through three damans. I am Dev Daman, and near me are the other two damans."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This means: Nag Daman is on the left side of Shri Thakurji, and Indra Daman is on the right. The left side, where Nag Daman is, represents Shriyamanaji, for she subdued the serpent of time (Kaal Sarp). The punishment of Yama or death cannot touch those who drink the waters of Shriyamanaji. She is the beloved and eternally perfect consort of Shri Thakurji, so she resides on his left and serves him. On the right side is Indra Daman, in the form of Girirajji himself, who is ever ready for seva. He is called Haridas Rai, the crown among devotees. During Indra's wrath, he understood the Lord's will and took the form of an umbrella to protect all of Braj, punished Indra, and revealed the Lord's glory. Because of this, Girirajji never reveals his own fame but only the glory of the Lord.

In the middle is Dev Daman, therefore, of all divine incarnations like Shri Jagannath and Narayan, the one who humbles their pride is Shri Govardhandhar. Hence, in the Bhagavata Purana, it is said: "Ete cha

ansha kala pumsah krishnas tu bhagavan svayam." Therefore, my name is Dev Daman; please reveal me.

Then Shri Acharyaji left the southern region of Jharkhand and, leaving the earth's parikrama incomplete, came to Braj. He arrived at Shri Govardhan. At that time, five sevaks were with him — Damodardas Harsani, Krishnadas Meghna, Bade Ramdas, Madhavdas, and Narayandas. In the evening, Shri Acharyaji sat on the platform (chotra) outside Sadu Pandey's door.

Sadu came, bowed down, and said, "Swami, will you eat something?" Then Krishnadas Meghna said, "Shri Acharyaji does not accept anything from anyone's house. The sevaks prepare, and he takes only what they offer." While they were conversing, Shri Govardhandhar spoke from the mountain, saying to Sadu Pandey's daughter, "Naro! Bring milk as my offering."

Naro replied, "Oh, my dear Lal! I will go, but my guests have arrived. Let me first serve them, then I will bring your milk." Shri Govardhandhar said, "Guests have come, that is good, but they cause me delay." Then Naro filled a bowl with milk, went up the mountain, and offered it to Shri Govardhandhar. Whatever milk was left, she brought it back down. Shri Acharyaji asked her, "Where had you gone?" Naro replied, "I went to feed milk to the deity of the mountain — Dev Daman." Shri Acharyaji said, "Give us the remaining milk from this bowl." Naro gave it, and Shri Acharyaji drank it.

Then in the minds of Sadu Pandey, Naro, and Bhavani arose the thought — "He does not take anything from anyone's home but accepts what was offered to Dev Daman. Therefore, he must have great affection for Dev Daman." Sadu Pandey asked, "Maharaj! Have you come here to visit Braj's holy places, or do you have some other purpose?"

Shri Acharyaji said, "In the south, in Jharkhand, Dev Daman appeared to me and said, 'Reveal me. I dwell upon Shri Govardhan, between Indra Daman and Nag Daman.' For that reason, I have come here. Dev Daman has great grace upon you." Then Sadu Pandey, Naro, and Bhavani humbly said, "Maharaj! You are victorious; we are defeated. Please make us your sevaks."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Its meaning is this — "Whoever comes to our Braj and to Govardhan, whatever curd, milk, bread, or simple food they ask for, we give. But you do not take from anyone except sevaks. Therefore, we are defeated; please make us

your sevaks. We, the Brajwasis, are worshipped by the world, but you are worshipped by us." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Tomorrow morning, I will give you your initiation."

The next morning, Sadu Pandey, Naro, and Bhavani bathed and sat purified. Then Shri Acharyaji initiated them with names and made them offer their dedication. Then Shri Acharyaji said, "You should serve Dev Daman." Sadu Pandey said, "Maharaj! We Brajwasis are simple folk; we do not know the rules of conduct and worship."

Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "Your love for Dev Daman surpasses all. You are guileless and pure devotees. Therefore, serve in whatever way your heart feels." Then Sadu Pandey brought pure ingredients — milk, curd, ghee, sugar and Shri Acharyaji cooked, offered bhog, and ate. Afterward, he sat on the platform at Sadu Pandey's door with all the Vaishnavas. Sadu Pandey's brother, Manikchand, who lived separately, came at night.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Manikchand's manifestation is that of Madhumangal, Krishna's companion.

That night, Sadu Pandey told all the Brajwasis, "A great Mahapurush has come to my house. Tomorrow, he will reveal Dev Daman. So all of you come for darshan." The next morning, all the elderly and respected Brajwasis came — Manikchand, Sadu Pandey, and others. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu asked, "Tell us, how did Dev Daman manifest on Shri Govardhan Mountain?"

Sadu Pandey said, "Maharaj! There was once a cowherd in our village who used to take all the cows to graze. One Brahmin had a cow that gave a lot of milk. But when the Brahmin sat to milk her, she gave none. Even the next morning, she gave no milk. For two days this happened. On the third day, the Brahmin grew angry and said to the cowherd, 'My cow gives plenty of milk, but you must be milking her secretly.' Thus, he frightened the cowherd greatly.

The cowherd said, 'I have never milked your cow. Tomorrow, I will show you the truth.' The next day, he took all the cows to the forest, keeping a close eye on that cow. The cow climbed up the hill, and the cowherd followed quietly, hiding. The cow went to a rock on Govardhan Mountain that had a hole in it and poured all her milk there. Seeing this, the cowherd stayed hidden and observed.

For three or four days, he watched the same thing. Then he went home and told the Brahmin, 'Your cow goes to Govardhan Mountain

and pours all her milk into a hole on a rock. You falsely accused me of theft. If you don't believe me, come with me tomorrow.' The Brahmin said, 'I will come in the morning.' The next day, when he tried to milk the cow, she gave nothing, and then went up the mountain. The Brahmin followed with the cowherd. The cow poured her milk into that hole in the rock and then returned home.

That night, the Brahmin called a meeting of the Brajwasis and told them everything. One elder said, 'Either there is some sacred object or treasure beneath that hole, or it is the divine form of Shri Thakurji. A cow would only offer milk there for one of these two reasons.' So ten or fifteen Brajwasis decided to dig and see what was below. The next morning, they followed the cow. As before, she poured milk into the hole, then descended. The Brajwasis dug beneath the rock and found a seven-year-old boy. They asked, 'Who are you?'

He said, 'I am the deity of this mountain. My name is Dev Daman. I am very fond of milk and curd. Send your daughter Naro to offer it to me every morning and evening. And do not place the stone back over me.'

Then the Brajwasis went home. From that day, they would daily offer milk, curd, and butter to Dev Daman, in the morning and evening. If hunger arose, Dev Daman himself would come and ask for food. In this way, Dev Daman brought great joy to all the Brajwasis. Whatever wish they made, he fulfilled. Now, whatever your desire is, Maharaj, please do it. We have told you exactly how Dev Daman manifested."

Then Manikchand, Sadu Pandey's brother, said, "When Dev Daman appeared, he told me, 'I have manifested upon Giriraj. Offer me butter daily.' Since then, I have been offering butter every morning." Shri Acharyaji said, "Tomorrow morning we shall go up the mountain for darshan."

The next day, after bathing, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu went to the mountain with all the Vaishnavas. He called Sadu Pandey and Manikchand, who came together. Manikchand said, "Maharaj! Please accept me as your refuge." Then Shri Acharyaji bathed him, initiated him, and made him offer his dedication. Then Sadu Pandey, Manikchand, and all the Vaishnavas went up the mountain with Shri Acharyaji.

There, Shri Govardhannathji rose and came before Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji took Shri Govardhandhar in his arms, touched both his cheeks, and said, "Baba! What is your wish now?" Shri

Govardhandhar said, “Please establish my seva (worship).” Then, upon Govardhan Mountain, near Apsara Kund, Shri Acharyaji had a small temple built. A Rajput named Ramdas Chauhan lived in a cave there. Shri Acharyaji appointed him as sevak to perform Shri Nathji’s seva.

He decorated the Lord with peacock feathers on his turban, a crown-like ornament with a crescent, and a garland of gunja beads. He offered bhog made of milk, curd, and butter brought by Sadu Pandey. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Sadu Pandey, “Whatever items or supplies are needed, give them to Ramdas.”

At that time, Kumbhandasji Gaurva lived at Yamunavat, and he too came and became a sevak. Shri Acharyaji assigned him the seva of singing kirtans. Many Brajwasis from around Giriraj became sevaks of Shri Acharyaji.

After some time, Shri Acharyaji instructed Purnamall to build a proper temple. When it was completed, Ramdas Chauhan, the Rajput, left his body. Then Shri Acharyaji told Sadu Pandey, “You should serve.” Sadu Pandey replied, “Maharaj! We Brajwasis do not know the rituals of worship, and we have much household work and farming. We will provide all the necessary items and offerings, but the seva we cannot perform.”

Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Think of someone suitable.” Sadu Pandey replied, “At Radhakund and Krishnakund, there are Bengalis. If you wish, I can call them.” Shri Acharyaji said, “Call them.” Then Sadu Pandey called the Bengali and built a small hut for him near Rudrakund. Shri Acharyaji appointed Krishnadas, a Shudra, as the overseer and sevak, saying, “Whatever the Bengali needs, bring it from Mathura or Agra.”

Later, Krishnadas removed the Bengali and placed a Vaishnav in his stead; his story will be told in Krishnadas’s Prasang. In this way, Sadu Pandey, Naro, Bhavani, Manikchand, and others became sevaks of Shri Govardhannathji and helped establish his worship in the open.

Prasang 2 – Cows Offered to Shri Nathji and Gopalpur

Established

One time Shri Govardhandhar said, “Cows are very dear to me.” Then

Shri Acharyaji called Sadu Pandey and gave him a pavitri used for Vedic rites, and said, “Sell this for its price and bring cows for Shri Govardhannathji!” Then Sadu Pandey said, “Maharaj! The cows at our house are all Shri Govardhannathji’s.” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Do as I say. Sell this gold and offer cows on our behalf to Shri Nathji. And you Brajwasis, all together, each of you offer one or two cows separately.”

Then Sadu Pandey sold that pavitri and brought two cows. Shri Acharyaji offered them to Shri Nathji. And among Sadu Pandey, the Brajwasis, etc., some offered one cow, some offered two cows, some offered four cows. In this way, thousands of cows were offered. Then, for the cows to reside, a village named Gopalpur was settled near the temple. The name ‘Gopal’ was given to Shri Thakurji. From that day onward, the cows of Shri Nathji increased greatly. So, cows are very dear to Shri Thakurji. Thus Chhitswami has sung:

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(राग गौरी | Raga Gauri)

आगेंगाय, पाछ गाय इत गाय उत गाय, गो वंदा को गायन में ब सवोई भावें। गायन के संग घावें, गायन में सचुपावें,

गायन की खुररेनु अङ्ग सो लगावें ॥१॥

Ahead, cows; behind, cows; here cows; there cows; Only in the company of cows does

Govinda feel like dwelling. He moves with the herd of cows, finds true joy among the

cows, He applies the dust raised by the cows’ hooves upon his body. □ 1 □

गायन सो ब्रज छायो, बैकुण्ठ हू बसरायो, गायन के हेतु, ग र कर लें उठावें। 'छीतरवामी' ग रधा र, वठ्ठलेस वपु

धा र, ग्वा लया को भेष कये, गायन मेंआवें॥२॥

By the cows, Braj became shaded; even Vaikunth was forgotten; For the sake of the cows,

he lifted up the mountain. ‘Chhitarvami,’ the Holder of the Mountain, assuming Vitthalesh’s form, made the guise of a cowherd and came among the cows. □ 2 □

✿✿✿

In this way, Shri Govardhannathji gave happiness to Sadu Pandey and all the Brajwasis.

Prasang 3 – The Golden Bowl of Milk at Naro's House

And one day, Shri Govardhannathji came from the temple to Sadu Pandey's house carrying a golden bowl. He said to Naro, "Put milk in this for me." Then Naro said, "This bowl is small; how will milk fit into it?" Then Shri Nathji said, "You keep pouring into it; I will drink." So Naro kept putting milk into the bowl, and Shri Govardhandhar kept drinking. In this way, after drinking the milk, he tossed the bowl at Naro's place and at night returned and went to sleep in the temple.

Then, when morning came, she did the house tasks—heated the milk, churned the curd and then, taking the daily offerings of milk, curd, and butter, and taking the golden bowl, she came to the temple and said, "At night Dev Daman came carrying a golden bowl; he drank the milk and threw the bowl at my house. Ah, a child indeed! So take this golden bowl." Then all the inner sevaks were astonished, saying, "Such is the grace upon Naro." In this way, he would come once daily to Sadu Pandey's house.

Prasang 4 – The Old Mother's Breakfast and Dev Daman

Among the Children

Next to Sadu Pandey's house lived Sadu Pandey's younger brother, the Brajwasi Manikchand. There were many cows and buffaloes at his house. Manikchand's mother and Sadu Pandey's mother were very elderly. That old woman stayed at Manikchand's house. When in the morning the churning of the curd was done, then bread with butter and curd would be placed before that old woman by all the household people. It was that old woman's rule to distribute the breakfast to all the children. So all the children of Aniyor, having gathered together, sat at the door. When that old woman called out, "Oh, all you children! Come take your own breakfast," then all the children came near. Among them, Shri Govardhandhar too came as a seven-year-old boy.

That old woman would take each child by the hand, ask his name, and place bread, butter, and curd upon his hand, giving in this manner to everyone. Then, when she held Shri Nathji's hand, she asked, "What is your name?" Then Shri Nathji said, "My name is Dev Daman!" Then the old woman said, "Dev Daman, the deity of the mountain?" Then he said, "Yes, yes." "I am devoted—come daily at this time to take breakfast." Then Shri Nathji departed.

In this way, Shri Govardhandhar showed grace to the Brajwasis like Sadu Pandey, etc. He asked like a child and took. Thus Sadu Pandey, Manikchand, Naro, Bhavani, and the old mother—the mother of Sadu Pandey and Manikchand—are great recipients of Shri Acharyaji's grace, belonging to the Lord. How far can one speak of their story?

Varta 74 - Gopaldas Jatadhari

Now, the story of the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Gopaldas, the Jatadhari Gaud Brahmin from Prayag, is being told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Gopaldas, in the divine play (Leela), is one of Lalitaji's companions. In the Leela, his name is Rasabhadra. He was born in Prayag in the house of a Gaud Brahmin. When he was six years old, many Naga renunciates (Vairagis) came to Kashi. They stayed there for a few days and then all went to Prayag for the Makar Sankranti holy bath. Gopaldas went with his father for the bath at Makar Sankranti. In the crowd, he got separated from his father and began to cry.

Then one Naga said to him, "I will take you to your father." Saying this, the Naga took Gopaldas to his camp, gathered his belongings, and fled with him. He went south and kept Gopaldas with him as his disciple. Later, Gopaldas stayed with the group of that Naga renunciate for thirty years. Then, when that Naga died, the thought arose in Gopaldas's mind, "I should go on a pilgrimage."

So, he joined one hundred and fifty Naga Vairagis and went to Dwarka. After that, from Dwarka, the same group went to Mathura. Gopaldas too came to Mathura. At that time, Shri Acharyaji was at Vishram Ghat performing his Sandhya Vandana (evening prayers). Gopaldas saw Shri Acharyaji there and stood near him. Then Krishnadas Meghana said, "Why are you standing here? Go away! Your group of Naga Vairagis has gone."

Gopaldas replied, "I have been separated from my true companion for many lifetimes. Now, may Shri Acharyaji show mercy upon me so that I may once again be united with the divine company of Bhagwan."

After completing his Sandhya Vandana, Shri Acharyaji said, "Gopaldas, have you come?" Gopaldas bowed down and said, "Maharaj! I have come by your grace. But, Maharaj, I have wandered much, taken bad company on many paths, committed all kinds of sins, and become extremely wicked. Only through your mercy can I cross this ocean of worldly existence. I have no strength of my own. Therefore, please take me into your refuge."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Shave off your matted hair, bathe, and

come. Then I will give you a name." So, Gopaldas shaved his head, bathed in the well, and then bathed again in Shri Yamunaji. He came to Shri Acharyaji, who gave him a name and made him perform submission (Nivedan).

Then Gopaldas humbly said, "Maharaj! What is your command for me now? Tell me what service I should do." Shri Acharyaji said, "Come with us to Govardhan. There, serve in the garden of Shri Govardhandhar."

After that, Shri Acharyaji went from Mathura to Shri Govardhan and arrived at the temple of Shri Nathji. Gopaldas was taken for the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. Later, he was given the service of tending the garden of Shri Nathji.

He served so sincerely that he watched over every single flower and fruit, guarding all the trees carefully. No dirt or grass was allowed to remain in the garden. He kept all the trees green and fresh by watering them regularly. His thought was, "Here, Shri Thakurji comes to play; therefore, the place must remain beautiful and pure."

One day, after some time, a small boy, the son of a Vaishnav, used to secretly pluck five or ten flowers daily for offering to his own Thakurji. Gopaldas made many efforts to find out who was stealing the flowers, but could not discover it.

One day, he hid in the garden. The Vaishnav's son, about eleven years old, looked around to see if Gopaldas was there. Seeing no one, he began to pluck flowers. Gopaldas rushed forward, caught the boy, and beat him. The boy escaped and ran away. Gopaldas, angry, chased after him. The boy, fleeing, hid in the temple of Shri Nathji, where the doors were open for the offering. The boy hid inside for protection.

Gopaldas, blinded by anger, did not realize it was the temple. He struck the boy once there. Everyone intervened and stopped him. Shri Nathji felt very displeased, thinking, "Gopaldas struck a boy inside My temple? He did not restrain himself even here?" Shri Nathji later forgave him, but the punishment for that offense was that Gopaldas was forbidden from ever touching the flowers meant for Shri Nathji's offering.

Afterward, there was no one serving in the betel (paan) room, so Shri Acharyaji gave that service to Gopaldas Jatadhari. Gopaldas began serving the paan with great devotion. During the month of Ashadh, when the heat and humidity were great, he would spread the paan

leaves on a mat, cover them with a wet cloth, and spend the whole night keeping them moist and fresh.

Shri Acharyaji had a rule: during the night, two or three times he would rise and inspect all the sevaks to see that none were talking worldly matters or speaking ill of anyone. One midnight, Shri Acharyaji went to inspect. From afar, he saw some sevaks singing kirtan, some beating drums, some reciting Panchadhyayi, some discussing the stories of Bhagwan. Seeing this, he was pleased that none engaged in worldly talk or slander.

Then, when he came to see Gopaldas, he found him overcome by drowsiness but still diligently tending to the paan. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu became very pleased with Gopaldas, thinking, “He is the best among all. Even when sleep overcomes him, he continues serving Bhagwan.”

Prasang 1 – Shri Acharyaji’s Command to Serve Shri Nathji

Personally

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, “Gopaldas, tomorrow morning, after bathing, go inside the temple of Shri Nathji. Go near Shri Nathji and fan Him.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Earlier, there was no one to fan during the afternoon rest.

So, the next morning, Gopaldas bathed and went into the temple near Shri Nathji to fan Him. Immersed in love, he continued fanning even during the Lord’s rest time, following Shri Acharyaji’s command. Shri Acharyaji said, “Gopaldas! During the rest time, fan with your eyes closed. Do not open your eyes.” So even at night, Gopaldas would fan with his eyes closed. Thus, Gopaldas became so divine that his consciousness transcended bodily awareness, and even the obstacles of night did not hinder him.

One night, Shri Nathji said, “Gopaldas! Open your eyes and see My darshan.” Gopaldas replied, “Maharaj! I have no permission from Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Therefore, I cannot open my eyes.” Then Shri Nathji Himself placed Mahaprasad in Gopaldas’s mouth, yet Gopaldas did not open his eyes. Such was his strict obedience to Shri Acharyaji’s command that he would not disobey even when Shri Nathji Himself

instructed him. Shri Swaminiji would appear and converse with Shri Govardhandhar, and Gopaldas would hear it all. Such was the grace upon him.

Prasang 2 – Gopaldas's Atonement and Departure

Later, one day, a thought came to Shri Nathji's mind: "This is the same Gopaldas who struck the Vaishnav's child inside My temple when he hid before Me. That was his offense. Now, to purify him of that sin, I will make him experience the pain of separation (viraha)." Thinking thus, Shri Nathji changed Gopaldas's inner disposition. A thought arose in Gopaldas's mind: "I should perform a circumambulation of the earth."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Because Shri Gusainji has written, "Buddhi preraka Krishnasya padapadm prasidatu" May the Lord Krishna, who inspires our intellect, be pleased. Whatever kind of thought the Lord inspires in a soul, that soul performs such an act. So, Gopaldas came to Shri Acharyaji and requested, "Maharaj! Please grant me permission; I have the desire to circumambulate the earth." Shri Acharyaji said, "You may certainly go."

Gopaldas bowed to Shri Acharyaji and departed. All the Vaishnavs were astonished: "On whom such grace was bestowed, one to whom Shri Nathji Himself spoke, whom He personally fed Mahaprasad with His own hands, how could such a thought arise in his mind?"

This created doubt in the minds of the Vaishnavs. One Vaishnav asked Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! How could such a divine devotee as Gopaldas get this idea of leaving service and going on a world pilgrimage?" Shri Acharyaji replied, "He has committed one grave offense. The son of a Vaishnav used to steal flowers from Shri Nathji's garden, and Gopaldas struck that boy inside the temple. For that sin, the Lord has now given him a punishment. He will not be able to go far. From the burning pain of separation, he will leave his body and attain the Lord's Leela. There will be no obstacle to his liberation."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that after one experiences the fruits of sin and virtue in this world, then one attains the Lord.

Then all the doubts of the Vaishnavs were removed.

Later, when Gopaldas reached the place called Majhali Dwai, the remembrance of Shri Nathji's form as Swaroopanand arose in him.

Overcome by the pain of separation, he fell down crying out, “Alas! Who is more wicked than I? I left the service of Shri Nathji, the divine experience of Swaroopanand, and the company of Vaishnavs to go on this pilgrimage around the world? Shame on me! Shame on my mind that conceived such a thought!” Saying thus, he fainted from grief. Fixing his mind on the form of Shri Govardhandhar, he gave up his body and attained the divine Leela.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This story shows that one should never commit an offense against anyone. Such offenses become obstacles in the supreme path of devotion. Through offenses, one’s devotion declines. Therefore, one must always remain fearful of offenses and firmly believe in the commands of Shri Acharyaji.

Even when Shri Nathji Himself said, “Open your eyes,” Gopaldas did not open them because Shri Acharyaji had not permitted it. Shri Nathji was pleased by this obedience. And this story establishes that in the Path of Grace (Pushtimarg), the pain of separation (viraha) is the main means for removing all offenses. Through separation, one attains the Lord. This is the principle revealed here.

Thus, Gopaldas was a divine sevak, deeply devoted to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, a recipient of his grace, and firmly established in faith. His story is told up to this point.

Varta 75 - Krishnadas Husband and Wife

Now, the feeling (bhav) of the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Krishnadas, and Krishnadas's wife, who were Gujarati Brahmins living in the village of Vad Choila in Gujarat, is being told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play (Leela), these two are the forms of Shrutis. They are the two daughters of Madan Gopa. Once, Shri Chandravali met Shri Thakurji secretly in a signal (hinted) meeting. These two daughters of Madan Gopa, named Nanda and Shubhda, told everything about it to Kirti. When Shri Chandravali and Shri Krishna were having a private conversation, Kirti became upset and said, "Such things should not be done by anyone." Hearing this, Shri Chandravali cursed them, saying, "You shall be born on earth."

Thus, Nanda became Krishnadas, and Shubhda became his wife. Krishnadas was born in Vad, and his wife was born in a Brahmin's house in Choila. When they grew up, Krishnadas married her. Since childhood, both had the same nature, whenever a vairagi, saint, or sadhu came to their home, they never let them go away empty-handed.

One day, Krishnadas's wife went with some other women of the village to collect clay. While digging, a large mound broke and fell upon them, and all the women were buried underneath. At that very moment, Shri Acharyaji arrived there. Seeing the mound collapse, He told the Vaishnavs, "Quickly remove the soil; some women are buried here." Many Vaishnavs from Gujarat were present with Him, and all of them immediately started removing the soil and rescued the buried women. Among them, four were almost dead.

Then Shri Acharyaji recited Vedic mantras and sprinkled water over all the women. Instantly, they regained consciousness. Meanwhile, the people of the village gathered and took their women home. Krishnadas's wife bowed (did dandvat) to Shri Acharyaji and prayed, "Maharaj! Who are You, who has revived us, the women who were buried and almost dead? Such mercy only You could show. Without You, who else could help at this time!?"

Shri Acharyaji said, “You are a divine being, belonging to the Lord. Because of you, the lives of all these women were saved.” Krishnadas’s wife then humbly said, “Maharaj! Please be merciful and visit my home. Kindly accept my submission.”

At that time, Krishnadas Meghan said, “Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu accepts offerings only from His own sevaks; He takes no one else's offerings.” While they were talking, Krishnadas returned home and heard that his wife had been buried under the soil. He ran there immediately. The woman told him, “Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu Himself, the Lord, came and revived all of us by sprinkling water upon us. But He accepts only His own sevaks, not anyone else.”

Krishnadas then went and bowed to Shri Acharyaji and prayed, “Maharaj! Please come to our home and make both me and my wife your sevaks.” Shri Acharyaji graciously went to Krishnadas’s home, had them both take a purifying bath, and performed the ritual of initiation by name (Naam Nivedan). Afterwards, both of them prayed, “Maharaj! Please give us the opportunity to do seva.” Shri Acharyaji replied, “You are granted the seva of Vaishnavs. Serve the Vaishnavs who visit you. Also, you are given the seva of the clothes of Shri Navneetpriyaji (Lord Krishna).”

Shri Acharyaji stayed at Krishnadas’s home for three nights and taught them all the ways of the Path. Then he went to Dwarika. Krishnadas and his wife faithfully performed seva, serving visiting Vaishnavs with devotion. Later, Shri Acharyaji, while returning from Dwarika, again stayed one night at Krishnadas’s home and then proceeded to Adel.

Prasang 1 – The Devotion and Trial of Krishnadas’s Wife

At one time, ten or fifteen Vaishnavs gathered and went to Adel to have darshan of Shri Acharyaji. On their way, they stopped at Krishnadas’s house. That day, there was nothing available at home, and Krishnadas himself was not there. His wife bowed to all the Vaishnavs and welcomed them into the house. Then she thought, “There is nothing at home, and my husband is not here. The Vaishnavs must be hungry. What should I do now?”

In the same village, there was a merchant (baniya) who was often attracted to her because she was very beautiful. He had once said to her, “If you come to my house for one night, you may take whatever you wish.” The woman thought, “I should go to that merchant.”

She went to the merchant's shop and said, "I will come for one night, but I need the ingredients for food." The merchant, being pleased, gave her whatever she asked for. She took all the materials home, bathed, prepared the meal, offered bhog to Shri Thakurji, and then served the Mahaprasad to all the Vaishnavs. Whatever was left, she fed the cows. She herself did not eat anything.

In the evening, Krishnadas returned home with the groceries. Seeing the Vaishnavs there, he was delighted and greeted everyone. He asked, "When did you all arrive?" They replied, "Around noon." Krishnadas then said to his wife, "The Vaishnavs must be hungry. Quickly prepare food." His wife said, "They have already taken Mahaprasad. Do not worry."

Krishnadas was surprised. "How did you serve Mahaprasad? There was nothing in the house." Then his wife told him everything that had happened. Krishnadas bowed to her and said, "You are blessed; you have protected my dharma." That night, they again prepared food, offered bhog, and both husband and wife took Mahaprasad with the Vaishnavs.

Later that night, they sang kirtans and discussed divine stories with the Vaishnavs. In the morning, when the Vaishnavs were departing, Krishnadas humbly said, "Please do not leave my home hungry." Together with his wife, he quickly prepared food again, offered bhog, served Mahaprasad to the Vaishnavs, and respectfully bid them farewell. Krishnadas walked a little distance to see them off, then returned home.

In the evening, Krishnadas said to his wife, "You had promised that merchant you would go tonight. He must be waiting for you. Our purpose is fulfilled, and our dharma preserved. Now his desire should also be fulfilled. Bathe and adorn yourself."

The woman got up, bathed, and adorned herself with kohl, bindi, sindoor, and mahavar (red dye) on her feet. When she was ready to go, it began to rain heavily and it became dark. Krishnadas said, "The path is muddy. Your feet will get covered in mud, and the mahavar will come off. The merchant will be displeased. So, sit on my shoulders; I will carry you to his shop." He carried her on his shoulders through the rain and mud and set her down at the merchant's shop, then returned home.

The woman called out, "Open the door!" The merchant, happy, came out with a pot of water and said, "Wash your muddy feet." The

woman said, “My feet are clean and dry.” The merchant was surprised. “The road is full of mud—how are your feet clean?” The woman replied, “My feet are clean, why do you need to ask? Do your work.” The merchant insisted, “Tell me truthfully, how are your feet clean in such rain?” The woman said, “My husband carried me on his shoulders and dropped me at your shop.”

The merchant was stunned. “Are you speaking the truth? Why did your husband bring you here himself? You never speak to me. You came once, took groceries saying you’d come for one night, but you didn’t take any money. Tell me everything clearly.”

The woman replied, “Some Vaishnavs, my Guru brothers, came to my home, but there was nothing to feed them. I thought, ‘What is this body worth if Vaishnavs go hungry?’ So, I took ingredients for them. My husband was pleased with you and carried me to your shop himself. Do not be afraid.”

Hearing this, the merchant began to curse his own birth. He said, “You and your husband are blessed!” He bowed to her and said, “You are my sister in dharma. Please forgive my offense.” He then dressed her in a new sari and accompanied her back to Krishnadas’s home. There, bowing to Krishnadas, he said, “I am a great sinner. Please forgive my offense. Blessed are you both, whose dharma is true. Please take me under your shelter and free me from the suffering of this world. She is my sister, and you are my brother-in-law and worthy of my worship.”

Krishnadas replied, “We do not make anyone our sevak. We ourselves are sevaks of Shri Acharyaji. You too should become Shri Acharyaji’s sevak and attain fulfillment.” A few days later, Shri Acharyaji arrived in that village and stayed at Krishnadas’s home. Krishnadas told Him everything about the merchant. The merchant had a strong desire to become a sevak. Shri Acharyaji said to Krishnadas, “Call that merchant here.”

Krishnadas went and told him, “Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu has arrived.” The merchant came with Krishnadas, bowed to Shri Acharyaji, and humbly prayed, “Maharaj! I am very sinful. Please have mercy upon me.” Shri Acharyaji then bathed him, gave him a new name, and initiated him with the Brahmasambandh. His name was given as Gyanachand. Shri Acharyaji said, “You have received knowledge (Gyan) through the company of Krishnadas. Therefore, remain in the company of Krishnadas; through him you will attain the Lord.”

Shri Acharyaji accepted food at Krishnadas's home, where he personally prepared the meal, offered bhog, and ate. The next morning, he departed. Krishnadas accompanied Him for some distance. Shri Acharyaji said, "Krishnadas, you are blessed. I have instructed you to serve Vaishnavs, and you have served them with your body, mind, and wealth. There is none equal to you." Saying this, Shri Acharyaji departed, and Krishnadas returned home.

Thus, the divine Krishnadas and his wife became the recipients of Shri Acharyaji's grace. Through their association, the merchant too became a great Vaishnav. Hence, the story of Krishnadas and his wife is told up to this point.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): That merchant, in the divine play (Leela), is a Gopa named Paili. In his essence, he is a divine being. Through association with Krishnadas, he received initiation (Naam Nivedan) and later became a worthy recipient of grace.

This story of Krishnadas is indescribable. Any Vaishnav who has steadfast faith and dharma should read or listen to it. But if a worldly-minded Vaishnav listens to it and imitates such acts with the intent of physical action, he becomes fallen. Krishnadas and his wife were personally accepted by Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji resides within their hearts, and thus they are like fire — whoever looks at them with worldly eyes would be burned.

This act was performed only to shower grace upon the merchant and to demonstrate the rare and precious nature of Vaishnav seva. To serve Thakurji or the Guru is possible, but to serve a Vaishnav, who is the sevak of Thakurji, is extremely difficult. This story reveals that divine principle.

Varta 76 - Santdas Chopra

Now the account of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Santdas Chopra, a Kshatriya who lived in Agra near the market of grain sellers. The sentiments of his story are being told here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the Divine Leela, he is one of Chandravali's companions. Her name there is "Chandrika."

One day, Chandravali and Chandrika went together to bathe in Shri Yamunaji. After bathing, Chandravali said, "Today, Shri Thakurji has not come to the banks of Shri Yamunaji to play Holi. So you go across to Yashodaji's house and see." Then Chandrika went and at Nandarai's doorway she met Shri Swaminiji. Shri Swaminiji asked her, "Chandrika, where are you going? And where is Chandravali?" Chandrika replied, "I do not know where she is."

Then Swaminiji said, "Why are you lying? You must have gone to bring Shri Thakurji. You are very clever in such matters." Chandrika replied, "You are the clever one, for you are Chandravali. I truly know nothing. I have only bathed in Shri Yamunaji and am now returning home. Where is the cleverness in that? The people of Braj are always gossiping." She said this with pride. Then Shri Swaminiji said, "If you have become so proud, then take birth on the earth. When your pride ends, come back here."

Then that same Chandrika Sakhi took birth in Agra, in the house of a wealthy Kshatriya named Chopra. That man was Santdas's father. He had no children. Therefore, he used to give alms to vairagis and saints in the hope of obtaining a son, and he would beg them saying, "I have no offspring. May I receive a child through your grace." One vairagi said, "A son can be obtained only when Lord Mahadev is pleased." So that Kshatriya began worshipping Mahadev in such a way that his whole body became thin and weak.

Then, in a dream, Mahadev said, "Ask for whatever you desire." The Kshatriya said, "May I have a son devoted to Hari." Mahadev replied, "All the sons I give are outwardly inclined away from Hari. But you have asked for a devotee of Hari, how can I give that? I myself always desire the company of devotees of Hari. Still, I will answer you tomorrow."

Then Mahadev went to Shri Hari and asked, “Maharaj, a Kshatriya is asking me for a boon. He wants a son devoted to Hari. Is there such a son destined for him or not?” Bhagwan replied, “Go and tell him that in your house a son devoted to Hari will be born. He will uplift your entire family. Such a being, connected with divine play, will appear equal to me.”

Then Mahadev came in the Kshatriya’s dream the next day and said, “You are very fortunate. In your house will be born a son devoted to Hari who will purify your entire lineage.” Mahadev then returned to his abode. The Kshatriya awoke pleased from his dream, but thought, “It is only a dream. When it comes true, then I shall believe it.”

Later, his wife became pregnant, and in due time a son was born. Along with the child, their wealth also increased. The son grew up, and his father named him Santdas. Afterward, Santdas was married. Later his father passed away. The impurity period (sutak) after death had not yet ended when Santdas said to one of his fellow Kshatriyas, “My days of impurity are not yet over. Tell me if any katha (spiritual discourse) is happening somewhere, so that I can listen.”

That Kshatriya said, “Shri Acharyaji is staying at the house of Kanhaiyashal Kshatriya here. If you listen to his discourse, you will be uplifted.” Santdas said, “When you go, take me with you.” In the third watch of the night, Santdas went with that Kshatriya, bowed to Shri Acharyaji, sat down, and listened to the discourse. In his heart arose the realization that Shri Acharyaji is the complete Purushottam (Supreme Person).

Later, Santdas prayed to Shri Acharyaji, “Maharaj! Please show your mercy and take me into your refuge.” Shri Acharyaji said, “You are still in the period of impurity. After that ends, I will accept you as a sevak.” Santdas bowed and returned home. Even before his period of impurity ended, he daily came to listen to the katha. He would first have the darshan of Shri Acharyaji, then eat.

When he became purified, he bathed and came to Shri Acharyaji, bowed, and requested, “Maharaj! Please grace my home by coming there and purify me and my family.” Then Shri Acharyaji came to Santdas’s house. He bathed Santdas, performed the initiation, and gave him a name.Santdas then requested, “Maharaj, please also take my wife into refuge.” Shri Acharyaji said, “I will give her a name, but she is not divine by nature. However, through your association she will attain fulfillment.” Then he gave her a name.

Santdas then prayed, “Maharaj! Now please bestow upon me the seva of Shri Thakurji.” Then Shri Acharyaji entrusted him with the seva of Shri Navanitpriyaji’s cloth service (prasadi vastra seva). Afterward, he purified the household and prepared offerings, placed bhog before the Lord, and after eating, Santdas and his wife took the remnants (juthan) as mahaprasad from the Lord’s house.

Later, when Shri Acharyaji was sitting alone, Santdas came, bowed, and prayed, “Maharaj! Please bless me so that through this body I may experience Shri Thakurji, and that worldly joys and sorrows may not trouble me. May your divine form dwell in my heart, and may I experience the fruit of the Path of Grace (Pushtimarg).”

Then Shri Acharyaji taught Santdas the ‘Purushottama Sahasranama.’ He gave him a sacred text he had written himself and said, “Through this text all your wishes will be fulfilled. But in a few days, all your material wealth will be lost. Whatever wealth you dedicate to Shri Thakurji will remain. If you later spend for food and comfort from what is not offered to Shri Thakurji, you will turn outward from devotion. Therefore, remain wise, patient, and steadfast. You are divine in nature, so your dharma will be tested. It is difficult, but I am pleased with you, so no worldly obstacles will trouble you.”

Thus blessing Santdas, Shri Acharyaji departed for Braj. Then Santdas made ornaments and vessels of gold and silver for Shri Thakurji, some he kept in his home, some he sent to Shrinathji, and some to Shri Gusainji.

Prasang 1 – The Test of Santdas’s Faith

Santdas was very wealthy. His business was worth hundreds of thousands of rupees. But in time, he lost all his money, some stolen by thieves, some taken as a fine by the king. Eventually, he became penniless. Yet in his heart he felt joy, thinking, “What Shri Acharyaji said has come true.”

Later, only twenty-four rupees were left as his capital. With that, he began selling shells (kaudi) in the market. He arranged piles of shells worth a few paisa each and sat quietly without talking to anyone. People would pick up shells from his piles and pay him. He earned two and a half paisa daily. He would sit reading sacred texts. For half a paisa, he would buy roasted gram in winter and soaked chickpeas in summer. For one paisa, he would offer rajbhog to Shri Thakurji and take mahaprasad.

At night, with the remaining half paisa, he would buy sweets. Then at his home, the Vaishnav assembly would gather for kirtan and discussions, and afterward, he would distribute the sweets. In this manner, he maintained his life.

Once, Narayandas from Gaud Desh, a sevak of Shri Gusainji, heard that Santdas was living with great financial difficulty. So Narayandas wrote him a letter, enclosing a bill of exchange (hundi) worth one hundred gold mohurs, and wrote on the cover “for the courier, one rupee.”

The letter reached Agra. Santdas, who was earning only two and a half paisa a day, gave one rupee to the courier from his small earnings and went without cooking that day. He sent the hundi to Shri Gusainji in Shri Gokul and wrote a reply to Narayandas saying, “Through your kindness, today the offering of rajbhog to my Lord was interrupted for one day. Please never show me such favor again. I have sent your hundi to Shri Gusainji.”

The hundi reached Shri Gokul, to the treasurers Champabhai and Shankarbhai, who read it out to Shri Gusainji and said, “Maharaj, Narayandas of Gaud Desh sent this hundi to Santdas, and Santdas has sent it to you.” Then Shri Gusainji said with his own mouth, “Santdas is a highly blessed sevak of Shri Acharyaji and a dear one of the Lord. How could such a Vaishnav keep wealth with himself? That is why he has sent it here.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): There appears to be some doubt in this story. If Santdas had a capital of twenty-four rupees and earned two and a half paisa daily, how could he give one rupee to the courier? And if he wrote that the rajbhog was interrupted, why did he not offer it from that capital of twenty-four rupees?

The answer lies in understanding his state. Santdas’s faith and dependence were entirely upon Bhagwan, not upon his small capital. When all his worldly wealth was lost, whatever remained belonged to Shri Thakurji. The twenty-four rupees were part of Shri Thakurji’s funds, from which he traded shells. Hence, he could not use that divine capital to pay the courier. He gave the courier one rupee from his day’s earnings. Because of that, his own rajbhog offering was missed that day, though he took mahaprasad.

The flour offerings he made were distinct from rajbhog. Since he lived through the grace of Shri Thakurji, his personal service (seva) was considered missed that day, so he wrote to Narayandas that “your

grace caused a one-day lapse in my rajbhog."

Thus Santdas displayed the essence of vivek (discrimination), dhairya (patience), and ashraya (divine dependence): Vivek – He sent the hundi to Shri Gusainji and did not keep it. Dhairya – He never used Shri Thakurji's funds for himself. Ashraya – He found joy in all circumstances, without sorrow or complaint. In this way, Santdas showed the true form of wisdom, patience, and complete surrender. In this way, Santdas performed seva according to Shri Acharyaji's texts. And he remained absorbed in divine rasa. Therefore, we tell Santdas's story up to this point.

Prasang 2 – Mahadev Hears the Assembly and the Respect

for Mahaprasad

And at Santdasji's house, a Vaishnav assembly took place. All the Vaishnavs sat together in the courtyard. Then Mahadevji, hiding himself, would come daily to the doorway of the house to listen to the discourse on Bhagwan, and no one knew this. In Agra there was a merchant who was a sevak of Shri Gusainji. He was very fond of royal style. He heard that at Santdas's house a Vaishnav assembly gathers at night, where discourse on Bhagwan is held, and there is great joy. Then that merchant asked, "Do they distribute any mahaprasad?" A Vaishnav said, "They distribute roasted gram and chabeni."

Then the merchant said, "I will gather a Vaishnav assembly in my house and distribute large laddus." Later, the merchant prepared large laddus and, in the evening, sent word to all the Vaishnavs that a Vaishnav assembly would gather at the merchant's house where large laddus would be distributed. After that, those who were connoisseurs of rasa and eager for discourse all came to Santdas's house, and those who were greedy for food, flattering the merchant, went to his house in fours. In this way, ten to fifteen days passed. Then the merchant said, "Although I distribute large laddus, all the Vaishnavs do not come to my house. At Santdas's place they distribute roasted gram and chabeni, yet everyone goes there."

Then someone said, "At Santdas's place the joy of discourse and kirtan of Bhagwan is very great. Therefore, all the Vaishnavs go there." Then the merchant said, "Let us go one day to Santdas's place and see what kind of rasa there is. We will do the same in our house." Thus, taking two or four Vaishnavs with him, the merchant came to Santdas's house. The discourse on Bhagwan took place, but the merchant understood nothing. Later, he became sleepy, and when the kirtan and discourse had ended, roasted gram was distributed. The merchant too was awakened and given roasted gram. He took it in his hand, but feeling ashamed, he did not put it in his mouth. Holding it in his hand, he stood up to put on his shoes, and there he put it down. Then Mahadevji began to pick up the roasted gram. The Vaishnavs said, "Who is this?" They cried "Thief! Thief!" and caught him.

Then Santdas came and said to the Vaishnavs, "Do not speak like this. Why would a thief come during the discourse on Bhagwan?" Then

Santdas asked Mahadev, “Who are you? Speak the truth.” He said, “You are devoted to Bhagwan; therefore I shall speak. Let these people go away from here.” When all the Vaishnavs had gone, he said, “I am Mahadev. I have been secretly listening to the discourse and kirtan of Bhagwan. Today that royal-minded merchant dropped mahaprasad on the ground, so I gathered it and ate it. If mahaprasad comes under anyone’s feet, it causes great calamity.”

Then Santdas said, “Why do you sit near the door? Come inside.” Mahadev said, “Among the devotees of the Path of Grace, one who follows the Path of Rules (Maryada Marg) has no right. And you, absorbed in rasa, speak of Shri Thakurji’s many divine plays. I have no right to hear that. Therefore, I listen only as much as I am entitled to hear. For that reason, it is proper for me to sit this far away.” Then, taking leave of Santdasji, Mahadevji became invisible. Then, fastening the doors, Santdasji came into the house. From that day onward, Santdas adopted this practice: when all the Vaishnavs of his assembly had come in, he would fasten the door and then hold the discourse on Bhagwan, for if any worldly person came, it would not be good. Thus, Santdas is such a devotee of Bhagwan.

Prasang 3 – The Final Moments and Unwavering Ashraya

And when Shri Gusainji’s birthday would come, Santdas came year after year to Shri Gokul for darshan. Shri Gusainji, knowing Santdas to be Shri Acharyaji’s grace-filled sevak, showed him great kindness. After some time, Santdas’s body became tired, and he grew old. Then from Shri Gokul, Champabhai and Sankarbhai were called, with a letter of request written by Shri Gusainji. Then Shri Gusainji said to the treasurer Champabhai, “You go to Agra, to the Vaishnav Santdas’s house. Now he will give up his body, so take charanamrit and mahaprasad.” Then Champabhai, bringing Shri Gusainji’s charanamrit and mahaprasad, came to Santdas in Agra.

Then Santdas met the treasurer Champabhai with loving affection. Then Champabhai gave the charanamrit and mahaprasad to Santdas. Taking them, Santdas said to Champabhai, “Whatever vessels, utensils, and other things are in the house are all Shri Gusainji’s.” After that, whatever belonged to Shri Thakurji, and the deed of the house, he gave everything to Champabhai, saying, “If you wish, let the women of the household stay in the house for a few days. If you wish, sell it now and take the money.” In this way he handed over everything to Champabhai. Then Champabhai brought the house deed

and all the vessels and wealth to Shri Gokul and told Shri Gusainji all the news. Then Shri Gusainji said, “Santdas is Shri Acharyaji’s sevak. His discernment (vivek), patience (dhairya), and reliance (ashraya) are formed from these alone.”

Later, Santdas’s body became very weak. So he lay down on the ground. Then all the Vaishnavs of Agra came and gathered. They said to Santdas, “If you say, we will take you to the Renuka Tirtha. Or if you say, Mathura is a great shelter; we will take you there.” Then Santdas said, “How will Renuka or Mathura give me fulfillment? All my life I have taken refuge in Shri Acharyaji. Now at this time, why should I take refuge in a tirtha? And if I do, it will be a great obstacle.” Then all the Vaishnavs said, “If you say, we will take you to Shri Gokul.” Then Santdas said, “If I go now to Shri Gokul, where will I scatter the dust of my body? The seva of Shri Gokul has not been accomplished by me in any way. Therefore, now all of you take the name of Bhagwan.”

Then all the Vaishnavs began to take the name of Bhagwan. Some began to recite the Panchadhyayi, some began to sing kirtan. Later, when the time to leave the body came, Santdas said to the Vaishnavs, “Now all of you be silent and listen to me.” Then all the Vaishnavs fell silent. Then Santdas said, “Once it was Shri Gusainji’s birthday. That day I went to Shri Gokul. Shri Gusainji, having bathed in saffron water, was wearing a saffron dhoti, and, shaking out a saffron upper cloth, was putting it on. Then I went and offered obeisance. Then Shri Gusainji said, ‘Santdas, you have now arrived?’ Then I said, ‘Yes, Maharaj! I have just arrived.’ Then, thinking I had arrived late, he called for water and gave me the water of the Lord’s feet (prabhu charanodak). Meditating on that very moment, I left the body and attained the Divine Leela.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Thus, Santdas is such a firm, grace-filled devotee that he took refuge in no tirtha. He kept one steadfast refuge: Shri Acharyaji. Concerning coming to Shri Gokul or not, he said, “Now where shall I scatter the dust (of my body)?” This expresses the sentiment that, in the place of divine leela, where should a worldly body be put? The seva performed by the unworldly body in Shri Gokul, of Shri Thakurji, that alone is good. And what is the value of the body? He shows that the refuge in Bhagwan is the supreme attainment. Let the body fall anywhere.

Afterward, the Vaishnavs performed the funeral rites of Santdas’s body. Later, a Vaishnav came to Shri Gokul and told all these matters before Shri Gusainji. Then the hairs of Shri Gusainji stood on end. He

said, “Santdas is a great devotee of Bhagwan. Such reliance should be practiced by a Vaishnav, as Santdas has practiced.” In this way, he greatly praised Santdas. Thus, Santdas was such a grace-filled devotee of Shri Acharyaji. We tell his story up to this point.

Varta 77 - Sundardas Madhodas

Now, the sevaks of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Sundardas and Madhodas, were Ganga-putra Brahmins. They lived in a village ten kos from Shrijagannathrayji (Puri). The name of that village is Pipari. Living there, now revealing the sentiment of their Varta.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the Divine Play, Sundardas and Madhodas are both in the group of Radha's companions as the sakhis of a friend. There, Sundardas's name is "Sheela," and Madhodas's name is "Leela." Towards the west, these two were born in the village Pipari. There, Sundardas was born in the house of a Ganga-putra Brahmin. And Madhodas was born in the house of a Saraswat Brahmin.

Now, the father of Madhodas followed a pir in the Muslim community. He took that pir as his refuge. He acted like the Muslims. In that way, he would daily offer a garland and batasa. He had no son, so he observed a vow to the pir. Then a son was born. Then that Saraswat Brahmin had firm faith in the pir. That pir would speak to that Saraswat and converse with him. If it became publicly known that that Saraswat Brahmin was a Hindu, it would lead to reproach. Therefore, he named his son "Madhodas."

Krishna Chaitanya appeared in the Gauda country. He made Madhodas his sevak. However, in their minds there was firm devotion, of both Madhodas's father and Madhodas toward the pir. Above that, they kept one Thakur. They worshiped it for showing to people. When they set the offering before the Thakur, they would call the pir by name. Then the pir would come and eat. And in that same village lived Sundardas, a Ganga-putra Brahmin. His practice was this: whoever saint, great ascetic, or Mahapurush came, he would serve them the whole day, press their feet, bring water and all provisions, and supply everything. He would accompany them for a kos. In this way he lived.

At one time, Shri Acharyaji came to Shrijagannathrayji. He alighted at a tank near the village Pipari. Sundardas came, did dandavat to Krishnadas, and said, "I will press your feet. I will bring water. Whatever provisions you ask for, I will bring. I live in this village. Whoever saints, ascetics, and Mahapurushas come, I do their service. I am a Ganga-putra Brahmin householder. Therefore, whatever service

you tell me to do, I will do." Then Krishnadas said, "You remain separate from our things and from the bhav. Whatever you touch will become touched. Therefore, go to your own work. We have no need for anything. See, do not touch anyone." Then Sundardas said, "What offense of mine is there, that you do not tell me any service? I serve all the Vaishnavas who come. And you say, 'Do not touch anything.' What is the reason for that? I am a Brahmin."

Then Krishnadas said, "If you are a Brahmin, then that is for your own house. Here, those who are sevaks of Shri Acharyaji make the service happen. They are allowed to touch everything. Things touched by others are of no use." Then Sundardas stood at a distance. The Vaishnavas dug a little everywhere, fetched water, sprinkled it, and spread the seat. On that, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was seated. Seeing the form of Shri Acharyaji, Sundardas was enchanted. Afterward, Krishnadas went into the village and brought the provisions. Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu bathed, cooked, set the offering before Shri Thakurji, and then ate. Afterward, recognizing Sundardas as a divinely destined soul, he gave him Mahaprasad. As soon as Sundardas took the Mahaprasad, his intellect became pure.

Then Sundardas made a humble request to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! You are God in person. What offense of mine was there, that you did not have me do any service?" Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "The Vaishnavas who are with us all know our ways and discipline. You do not yet have knowledge of our ways and discipline. Therefore, we did not have you do service." Then Sundardas said, "Maharaj! Take me into refuge. Whatever way you instruct me, I will do some service to you. Then there will be joy in my mind. Therefore, please let me touch your feet." Then Shri Acharyaji, seeing Sundardas's humility, told Sundardas the Name and let him touch his feet.

After that, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu lay down to rest. Then Sundardas served the feet with supreme love the whole night. Two or four times in the night, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "Sundardas, now you go to sleep." Then Sundardas humbly said, "Maharaj! Sleeping is a daily thing. But when will I get this service of yours?" Afterward, when it was morning, Sundardas did dandavat to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu and requested, "Maharaj! Please show mercy and come to my home, and accept my wife."

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu went to Sundardas's home, bathed, cooked, and then said to Sundardas, "Sundardas, bathe and come with your wife." Then Shri Acharyaji performed Brahmasambandh for Sundardas, told the name to his wife, and had the dedication done.

Afterward, at Sundardas's house there was Lala-ji Thakur. He gave him a Panchamrit bath and set the offering. After that, he ate and gave the leftovers as Mahaprasad to Sundardas together with his wife. Then he stayed two days at Sundardas's home, taught all the practices of the Path of Grace, and then he went to have darshan of Shrijagannathrayji. Sundardas began to do seva.

Prasang 1 – Sundardas's Affection for Madhodas

Sundardas had great affection for Madhodas. Sundardas thought in his mind, "If this Madhodas becomes a sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, then he will be fulfilled. All his other refuges will be given up." Then Sundardas highly praised Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu before Madhodas, and said to Madhodas, "If you become a sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, then you will be fulfilled in this very birth. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu is God himself." Then Madhodas said, "Whatever I have, all is Krishna Chaitanya." Then Sundardas kept quiet. But the affection between the two was great.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): It is said that the relation with the Divine Play is firm; therefore, there was firm affection here. And Sundardas considered the welfare of Madhodas to be in this very birth. So Shri Thakurji will accept him. What a devotee of God considers, that alone comes to pass.

Afterward, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu had darshan of Shrijagannathrayji, stayed there some days, and then came from Purushottam Puri. Then he stopped at Sundardas's house, bathed, and prepared the food. After that, he set the offering before Shri Thakurji. At that time, Madhodas came to Sundardas's house and sat near Sundardas. Meanwhile, when the time came, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu removed the offering. Madhodas saw the platter of Mahaprasad filled. After that, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu ate and lay down to rest. Then Madhodas said to Sundardas, "Your guru Shri Acharyaji's hands are not acceptable to Shri Thakurji. I saw the platter of Mahaprasad filled. And at my home, when I place offerings before Shri Thakurji, not even a morsel remains. My Thakur eats everything."

Then Sundardas said, "If nothing remains, then what do you eat?" Then Madhodas said, "I keep separately what is suitable for my home. Whatever is more for the Thakur, that much I place. From that I do not eat anything." Then Sundardas said, "I will give you an answer to this question in the last quarter of the night. Come then, and I will tell you." Then Madhodas went home. And Sundardas, together with his wife, took Mahaprasad. Afterward, when Shri Acharyaji had rested and then risen, Sundardas said to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, "Maharaj! There is a Saraswat Brahmin named Madhodas. He says, 'What I place before Thakur, my Thakur eats all of it. Nothing remains on the platter.'"

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "He is a fool. At his house, a

ghost is eating. Whatever has been touched by Shri Thakurji never diminishes. That Madhodas is a divine soul and in your mind the thought has arisen to redeem him. Therefore, now you must take him into refuge and definitely make him a Vaishnav." Then Sundardas was pleased.

Afterward, Madhodas came. Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu called Madhodas near and said, "Madhodas! Does your Shri Thakurji eat all the provisions?" Then Madhodas said, "Yes, yes. Nothing remains. From the platter, everything gets eaten. Such is my Thakur." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "Tomorrow, when you place the offering, inform me first. I will also see." Then Madhodas said, "Tomorrow morning I will inform you." After that, Madhodas went home. He rose early, cooked, and came and said to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, "Maharaj! Please come."

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu went and stood at the door of the temple. Then Madhodas placed all the provisions on the platter and showed them to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, and said, "Now I am placing the offering." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "Place it." Madhodas placed it before Thakur and remembered the pir. That pir was a ghost, so he came. Then, as soon as he came near the temple and saw Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, he began to burn with fire. And he said to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, "Today I will die of hunger." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said to the ghost, "What you have eaten until today, you have eaten. From today onward, do not ever come. If you come here again, you will become ash. Therefore, go quickly." Then that pir, weeping, ran away.

Afterward, when the time came, Madhodas went into the temple to remove the offering. Going there, he saw that the platter was filled with all the provisions just as they had been. Then Madhodas said to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, "Today you came here. Therefore, my Thakur did not accept (the offering) and remained hungry." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu did not say anything to Madhodas. He quietly went to Sundardas's house. There, he cooked, set the offering before Shri Thakurji, took Mahaprasad, and lay down to rest. Afterward, all the Vaishnavas, and Sundardas, took Mahaprasad.

Then it became night, and Madhodas slept. In the middle of the night, the attendants of Shri Thakurji came, threw him down from the cot, and began to beat him. Then Madhodas cried out, "Why are you beating me?" Then the attendants said, "Shri Acharyaji is the very form of Bhagavan. You said to him, 'Because you came, my Thakur remained hungry.' Therefore we are beating you. At your house, the

ghost is eating—the pir whom you took as refuge and whom you call daily. Today, Shri Acharyaji was present; therefore that spirit began to burn with fire and ran away. Your Thakur, in so many days, only today ate."

Then Madhodas said, "I did not know the true form of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu; therefore I spoke. Now, tomorrow morning, I will ask forgiveness for my offense and become his sevak. Now you, do not beat me." Then the attendants of Shri Thakurji said, "If you do not have your offense forgiven tomorrow, and if you do not become his sevak, then tomorrow night we will beat you and crush you to powder." Saying this, the attendants of Shri Thakurji departed.

Afterward, when it was morning, Madhodas came before Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, did dandavat, and made a humble request, "Maharaj! I have committed many offenses to you. I am an ignorant being. How could I know your true form? You are God in person. Now forgive my offense. My father died; he had told me, 'You should accept this pir.' So, for the outward show, I kept a Thakur. Therefore, now please show mercy and come to my house. Take me into refuge. In whatever way you instruct, in that way I will do Bhagavad-seva."

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, seeing Madhodas's humility, was pleased with him, and, showing mercy, again came to Madhodas's house. There, he had him bathe, told him the Name, and performed Brahmasambandh. After that, he gave Shri Thakurji a Panchamrit bath, seated him on a board, and placed him on Madhodas's head. Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu himself cooked, set the offering before Shri Thakurji, and then ate. Afterward, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said to Madhodas, "Madhodas! Go and call and bring all the Vaishnavas in this village to take Mahaprasad."

Then Madhodas said to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, "Maharaj! The Mahaprasad is little. And in this village there are many Vaishnavas. How will it reach everyone?" Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "You are a fool. Has Mahaprasad ever diminished? Go and call all the Vaishnavas." Then Madhodas said to the Vaishnavas, "Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu is quickly calling. Come." Hearing this, all the Vaishnavas, leaving all their tasks, ran and came. Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu placed bowls of Mahaprasad before everyone and had all take Mahaprasad. And the platter filled with Mahaprasad remained filled. Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said to Madhodas, "Madhodas! See, a Vaishnav should have firm faith. Mahaprasad never diminishes." In this way, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu showed Madhodas, at that time and in that place, this greatness.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why? Because he does not yet have firm faith; he is a new Vaishnav. If he sees some greatness, then he will have firm refuge in Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Without refuge, the fruit of attaining Bhagavan is not accomplished. Therefore, greatness was shown.

Then Madhodas's faith became firm. Afterward, Shri Acharyaji stayed there and taught Madhodas all the ways and practices of the Path of Grace, and then he went to Kashi.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this Varta, the principle is proved that, by the company of one who belongs to Bhagavan, even if someone is wicked, he will be redeemed. And that the claim that a ghost eats the offering placed before Thakur is not possible. Why? Wherever there is the name of Shri Thakurji, there a ghost and the like cannot enter. So how could a ghost eat what is placed before Shri Thakurji? Therefore, as said above, by association with the father of Madhodas, a spirit took shelter (became established). Therefore, a ghost was eating. From this it is shown that by keeping the company of a bad person, there is suffering; by keeping satsang, one is fulfilled.

From the association of Sundardas, Madhodas became greatly devoted to Bhagavan. They revealed mutual affection to Shri Thakurji. Therefore, Sundardas is such a gracious, devoted recipient of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's mercy. So, their Varta is said up to here.

Varta 78 - Mavji Patel Husband and Wife

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Mavji Patel, and his wife, Birjo, lived in Ujjain. The story of their devotional sentiment is told here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The way in which Mavji Patel and Birjo became sevaks of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu has already been described in detail earlier in the story of Gopaldas along with the Padmaraval. Therefore, it is not repeated here. In the Divine Leela, they are the friends (sakhis) of Shri Chandravaliji. The name of Mavji Patel in the Divine Leela is “Rupa,” and the name of Birjo is “Harkha.” They were both born in Ujjain. Mavji Patel was a man of great wealth.

Once, Birjo came to Shri Gokul. There she humbly prayed to Shri Gusainji, saying, “Maharaj! Please grant me the grace of performing Bhagavad Seva. I had earlier made this request to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. At that time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, ‘Your wish will be fulfilled by Shri Gusainji.’ Therefore, I now request you to kindly bestow your grace upon me.”

Then Shri Gusainji placed a small deity of Shri Lalji from the temple of Shri Navneetpriyaji’s play on Birjo’s forehead. Birjo then prayed to Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! Please show your grace so that Shri Thakurji may soon reveal His divine presence and give me His experience. Please tell me how to attain that.” Shri Gusainji replied, “Maintain the same loving feeling (bhav) toward the Vaishnavas of the Pushtimarg that you have toward me. Shri Thakurji will fulfill all your desires.”

Then Birjo took leave of Shri Gusainji, brought Shri Thakurji home, and celebrated a great festival. She invited Vaishnavas from many villages and joyfully distributed Mahaprasad, gifts, and clothes to everyone. In Ujjain, through her association with Padmaraval’s son, Krishnabhatt, she developed extraordinary wisdom and deep understanding of divine matters. Shri Thakurji began to show His loving affection toward her.

Prasang 1 – Birjo’s Twice-Yearly Pilgrimage to

Braj

Every year, Birjo would travel twice to Braj, once to Shri Gokul for the darshan of Shri Gusainji and once to Shri Govardhannathji for darshan. She would bring along one cart full of jaggery and one cart full of ghee.

She would stay fifteen days at the temple of Shri Nathji and fifteen days at Shri Gokul. She would personally make all arrangements for Shri Govardhandhar's offerings. The Mahaprasad that came from the temple she would carefully keep covered. When the cowherds returned from grazing the cows, she would take all that Mahaprasad to the cows' sheds and distribute it to the cowherd boys and women who tended the cows.

She made special feed from wheat chaff for the cows and fed them with love. She gave gifts and clothes to all the sevaks and honored everyone with devotion. Every day, she offered new ornaments and garments to Shri Nathji according to her wish. All the sevaks were pleased with her. At Shri Gokul, she presented gifts and offerings to Shri Gusainji, adorning all the children, daughters-in-law, and women with new clothes daily, and performing new devotional offerings every day.

Prasang 2 – Birjo's Wish to Serve Mahaprasad Herself

Once, on a festival day, Vaishnavas were partaking of Mahaprasad. Birjo was serving unsakhadi (a type of sweet). At that time, a wish arose in her heart, "If only all the Vaishnavas could sit together, and I could personally serve them sakhadi and Mahaprasad with my own hands." Later, Birjo said to Krishnabhatt, "A desire has arisen in my heart, I wish to invite Vaishnavas from all villages and personally serve sakhadi Mahaprasad to each one of them."

Krishnabhatt replied, "If Shri Gusainji gives his permission, then your devotional wish will be fulfilled." He further said, "Let us go to Shri Gokul with all the Vaishnavas and present this wish to Shri Gusainji. Whatever he says will be done. But this wish will require much wealth." Then Birjo came to Mavji Patel and said, "This is my wish please help fulfill it. I want to offer Mahaprasad with my own hands to all the Vaishnavas. I spoke to Krishnabhatt, and he said it will require wealth to accomplish."

Mavji Patel said, “I have one lakh mohurs (gold coins). If that will be enough, then happily carry out your wish after consulting Krishnabhatt.” Birjo then went to Krishnabhatt and said, “There are one lakh mohurs available. If this is sufficient to complete the wish, please let me know.” Krishnabhatt said, “Certainly! Shri Thakurji will fulfill your wish.”

Then Birjo returned to Mavji Patel and said, “Krishnabhatt has said that with this much, the wish will be fulfilled.” Mavji prepared the wealth and gave one lakh mohurs to Birjo. Birjo placed the coins before Krishnabhatt and humbly said, “Now it is in your hands please fulfill my wish.”

Krishnabhatt then wrote letters to Vaishnavas of all villages and sent them by riders with carriages and provisions. He affectionately invited all the Vaishnavas from Gujarat and Halar, arranged separate camps and expenses for all of them. Then, along with all the Vaishnavas, Krishnabhatt and Birjo set out from Ujjain for Shri Gokul.

They arrived first at Shri Nathji’s temple, where the whole group had darshan of Shri Nathji. They made offerings of ornaments, clothes, and jewelry, fulfilling their wishes there, and then proceeded to Shri Gokul.

At Shri Gokul, they had darshan of Shri Navneetpriyaji and of Shri Gusainji. Then Krishnabhatt humbly said to Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! Birjo has this wish, she desires to serve sakhadi Mahaprasad with her own hands to all the Vaishnavas. For this reason, we have come here with all the Vaishnavas. Please grant your permission so her wish may be fulfilled.”

Shri Gusainji thought within himself, “Birjo is truly fortunate to have such a divine wish. But if I give permission now, will it not create objections at this time? This wish will become famous in the world. However, Shri Acharyaji maintained the sanctity of Vedic tradition. People might say, ‘Shri Gusainji, who upholds Vedic order, allowed Brahmins to receive sakhadi Mahaprasad from the hands of a Patel’s wife.’ Such misunderstanding could cause harm to many souls.

Yet, if I do not fulfill the wish of a devotee, it would be against the principles of Pushti Bhakti. Therefore, a devotee’s heartfelt wish must certainly be fulfilled. I must find a way by which the Vedic order remains intact, the devotee’s wish is fulfilled, and all Vaishnavas are pleased.”

Then Shri Gusainji said, “This wish will be fulfilled in Shri Jagannathrayaji’s temple at Purushottampuri. There, all the Vaishnavas of earlier times will also assemble.” Krishnabhatt said to Birjo, “Your wish will be fulfilled at Shri Jagannathji’s temple in Purushottampuri. It will be completely accomplished there.” Birjo replied, “That is very good! Let us go to Purushottampuri. If Shri Gusainji also kindly comes, it will bring great joy.”

Then Krishnabhatt requested Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! If you too kindly accompany us to Purushottampuri, it will give immense happiness.” Shri Gusainji said, “I will also go. Whatever pleases the Vaishnavas must be done.” Then invitations were sent to the Vaishnavas of Shri Nandgaon and the western regions. Shri Gusainji, along with Vaishnavas from Mathura, went to Agra, then took along the Vaishnavas from Agra to Kashi, and from there gathered Vaishnavas from each village along the way.

Wherever they halted, new offerings and arrangements were made daily. Separate camps were set up for Vaishnavas of each village. Every day there were new kirtans, discourses, and celebrations in Shri Gusainji’s presence. Merchants accompanied them with carts filled with supplies.

All the Vaishnavas’ hearts were filled with joy, daily darshan of Shri Gusainji, daily new festivities. It was as if Shri Krishna Himself were traveling with His entourage in Dwarika. Elderly Vaishnavas and others all experienced great bliss. In every village where they stopped, the local people were blessed and became happy with wealth and other gifts. In this way, taking along all the Vaishnavas from various villages, they finally arrived at Shri Purushottampuri.

They had darshan of Shri Jagannathji and offered many kinds of sakhadi and unsakhadi preparations. Then, with her own hands, Birjo arranged the plates and served food to Shri Gusainji. After that, she served all the Vaishnavas with sakhadi and unsakhadi Mahaprasad, becoming deeply absorbed in divine love. Tears of bliss flowed from her eyes, and her entire body was thrilled with joy. She thought in her heart, “Blessed is Shri Gusainji, and blessed are divine souls like Krishnabhatt who gave me the experience of this supreme joy.”

After staying in Purushottampuri for some days, performing daily new offerings and serving different kinds of preparations according to each Vaishnava’s liking, they all began the return journey with the same joyful spirit. They came back to Shri Gokul and then stayed for some days at Shri Nathji’s temple, performing various offerings. The wealth

that remained afterward, Birjo offered it as a gift to Shri Gusainji.

Shri Gusainji was very pleased with Birjo and said, “You have accomplished an extraordinary devotional act by fulfilling the wishes of the Vaishnavas.” Later, Birjo took leave of Shri Gusainji and returned to Ujjain with the entire group of Vaishnavas. She lovingly served Mahaprasad to all, and for those who had no provisions, she gave clothes, utensils, and gifts, sending everyone away happily.

Birjo became a true and noble Vaishnava through the association of Krishnabhatt. All the Vaishnavas and Shri Gusainji were pleased with her, and Shri Thakurji continued to show His affection toward her. Thus, Mavji Patel and Birjo were among those blessed souls who had received the divine grace of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Therefore, their story concludes here.

Varta 79 - Gopaldas Kshetri of Naroda

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Gopaldas Kshetri, lived in the West. The feeling of their story is told.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Gopaldas is, in the Divine Leela, the chief khavas (attendant) of Shri Nandarayaji. There his name is “Jasvant.” So, Jasvant—on the day when Nandarayaji was seized by Varuna, sat Nandarayaji on the bank of the ghat and went to his own house for his own work. After that, Shri Nandarayaji was alone. Then Varuna seized him. Shri Thakurji, hearing this, brought Shri Nandarayaji back from Varunalok. Then Shri Baldevji said to Jasvant, the khavas of Shri Nandarayaji, “When Shri Nandarayaji was taken by Varuna, where were you?” Then Jasvant said, “I had gone home for some work.” Then Shri Baldevji cursed him, “Go, fall upon the earth. You have caused so much labor to Shri Nandarayaji. Being a khavas, you should have stayed in attendance at night.”

Thus, in the West, Gopaldas took birth in Naroda in the house of a Kshetri. When he was seven years old, he studied a lot. And he had a lot of wealth. And he had a very regal nature. Ten or five men walked in front and behind him. He did not spare anyone in criticism. If anyone was a good person, he would still find one or two faults in them. Later, in the West, there was another village. There Gopaldas was married. Having married, Gopaldas was returning with his wife. On the way, he met a great pandit and began to debate with him. They camped on the road for three days. But he did not defeat that pandit. After that, a fight occurred. Then Gopaldas’s father went to rescue him. The pandit’s men shot an arrow. Gopaldas’s father died. Then Gopaldas ran with weapons. The pandit fled with his men. Gopaldas searched much, but did not find him anywhere.

Then he performed the last rites for his father’s body and came home. After that, Gopaldas went to Dwarka for the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. There Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu had arrived. Then Gopaldas heard that Shri Acharyaji is a great pandit, who has refuted the doctrine of Maya. Then Gopaldas came to debate with Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. At once, in the discussion, he was defeated. Then Gopaldas said to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, “What is said in the Vaishnava dharma? Shri Thakurji resides in everyone’s heart. The whole world is also called Krishna-form. Then why are Vaishnavas

considered defiled by the touch of dogs, etc.? If all becomes Bhagavad-form, then how can touch be defiling?"

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "Our path is the Vedic path. And the Veda-shastras say this: the world is Bhagavad-form, and still, due to differences of purity and impurity, some touch is defiling. And others are superior. One should show compassion toward all. This is what the Vedic rule and the Vaishnavas say. You, however, speak of the attributeless, all-pervading—saying the entire world is Brahma-form. Then why do you, making fault-judgment in all, criticize this person and that? Why do you wear clothes? Brahma has nothing to do. He remains as a witness. Now you think." Hearing this, knowledge dawned on Gopaldas.

Then Gopaldas said, "Now I take refuge in you. My whole life has passed in wickedness. Now, taking me into refuge makes me fulfilled." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu bathed Gopaldas, recited the Name to him, and performed Brahmasambandh. Then Gopaldas said, "Please, show grace and come to my house." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came to Gopaldas's house in Naroda. At that time, Gopaldas's son was four years old. He was given the Name. The name of Gopaldas's wife was given. Then Gopaldas prayed to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, "Maharaj! What is now our command?" Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said to Gopaldas, "Bhagavad-seva will not be possible for you. Why? Because your wife and son are not divine. You are devine, so you have much viraha (separation). For one in viraha, there is much inner experience in the heart. External ritual actions do not proceed."

Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu wrote down the Gadya-Sholk and the Panchakshar-mantra and gave them to Gopaldas, and said, "Offer them bhog at home and eat and drink. And our instruction is: whichever jiva comes, you recite the Name to him. From birth, remain in the Swami position. Therefore, I have given you the Swami position. If a debater comes, debate with him. No one will defeat you." Saying this to Gopaldas, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu went on ahead. Thus Gopaldas began to impart the Name. He became a Vaishnava of great steadiness. He debated with debaters. Whatever words came from his mouth, he carried out. By the power of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, his fame spread in the West.

Prasang 1 – The Proper Way of Speaking about Service

Later, once when Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came to Shri Dwarikaji, on the way he came to the village of Naroda. There, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came to Gopaldas's house. But Gopaldas was not at home. Gopaldas's son was fourteen years old. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu asked Gopaldas's son, "Where has Gopaldas gone?" Then Gopaldas's son said, "Maharaj! He has gone for the seva of Shri Thakurji." Hearing these words, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu became very displeased with Gopaldas's son. He said, "Why did Gopaldas's son say such an improper thing? Now it is not proper to stay here." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu thought in his mind, "Let Gopaldas come. Let us see, what is Gopaldas's understanding? How does he speak?" Meanwhile, Gopaldas came and offered prostrations to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu.

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Gopaldas! Where had you gone?" Then Gopaldas said, "Maharaj! There was a need for the stomach. So I had gone for some worldly occupation." Hearing these words, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was very pleased with Gopaldas. He said, "It is proper for a Vaishnava to speak like this. One should not speak in such a way as to use the name of Shri Thakurji's seva for a worldly occupation."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This is the practice of a Pushtimargi, that even if one goes for seva, one still uses a worldly name. One should not publicly display Bhagavad-dharma; that is being Bhagavadiya. A person who is not a good jiva, even in worldly matters, to inflate his own greatness before everyone, uses the name of Bhagavad-seva. Afterward, Gopaldas prayed, "Maharaj! Please stay two or four days graciously. We have made many preparations to keep you in this way." But Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "I must go quickly to Shri Dwarka." Saying this, he went on and did not stay there.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): From this, although Gopaldas is Bhagavadiya, the understanding of Gopaldas's wife and son is not steady. Therefore, he went on. If he had stayed here, there would not have been bliss.

Prasang 2 – Shri Govardhannathji Gives Water with His Own

Jug

Gopaldas had intense viraha for the darshan of Shri Nathji. So he

came to Shri Nathjidwaar and had darshan of Shri Nathji. After that, Gopaldas developed a fever. He fasted twice. Then, one night, Gopaldas felt great thirst. There was no water nearby. He had brought along one of his own sevaks. He called him, but he had fallen asleep. And Gopaldas's throat dried up; no words would come out. Then he became agitated in his mind. Then Shri Govardhannathji, bringing His own drinking-water jug, came to Gopaldas and gave him water to drink, and left the jug right there.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): From this it is shown that the jug was left to manifest the glory of Gopaldas. So that everyone would know that Gopaldas is a great Bhagavadiya, the one to whom Shri Nathji gives water to drink. In the same way that jivas are fulfilled by singing the glory of Shri Thakurji, so too are jivas fulfilled by singing the glory of a Bhagavadiya. And Gopaldas was regal in nature. So when people saw only his outward conduct, they might commit the great offense of criticizing a Vaishnava. Therefore, Govardhandhar left the jug so that all would recognize Gopaldas as Bhagavadiya, and thus no one would criticize him. In this it is also shown: even though he is regal, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji is very dear to Me. Shri Nathji left the jug there to make this known to everyone. For Govardhandhar's heart is extremely tender. He cannot bear the suffering of His devotees.

Then, when it became morning, all performed the inner bathing and came into the temple of Shri Govardhannathji and looked, the jug was not there. So everyone began to worry. Then Shri Govardhannathji spoke to the elder Ramdasji, "Gopaldas was very thirsty at night. There I gave him water to drink and left the jug." Then Ramdasji came and said to Gopaldas, "Gopaldas! From where did you drink water at night?" Then Gopaldas said, "I developed a fever and had a great thirst. My throat had dried up, and I was agitated. Therefore I do not know who gave me to drink."

Then Ramdasji said to Gopaldas, "Shri Govardhandhar gave you water to drink and left the jug here. So I have come to take the jug. Therefore, your fortune is great." Then Gopaldas said, "Did the Lord have to undertake so much labor? He was angry with his own man, 'Why did you not keep water by me? And why did you go to sleep? I was extremely thirsty, and thus Shri Thakurji had to undergo labor. This is bad.'" After that, Ramdasji consoled Gopaldas and, taking the jug, brought it into the temple. Then Gopaldas became well. Having had darshan of Shri Nathji, he came to his own house. Yet the viraha for Shri Govardhandhar remained with him all twenty-four hours.

Prasang 3 – A Song of Separation

And one day, the viraha became very great. So, making the viraha into a lyric, he sang:

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"केकी सखंडी स्याम घन कंठ मनोहर हार। धन्य ते दन दे खशुं नैनन नन्दकुमार ॥।"

Peacock-feather-crested Shyam (dark one) with a cloud-like neck and a charming

garland — Blessed are the days when my eyes behold Nand Kumar (the son of Nanda).

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Prasang 4 – Name-Initiation by Shri Gusainji and the

Consequence

At another time, Shri Gusainji came to Shri Dwarika for the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. On the way, he came to the village of Naroda. He pitched camp outside the village and halted. At the time of the morning audience, Gopaldas went for the darshan of Shri Gusainji. Then two men went along with Gopaldas. They went there and had darshan of Shri Gusainji. Then both men said to Gopaldas, “Have Shri Gusainji grant us the Name.”

Then Gopaldas said, “I also give the Name. So when we go home, you come to my house; I will recite the Name to you.” In this way, the two men said to Gopaldas three times, “Our wish is that Shri Gusainji should recite the Name to us.” And all three times Gopaldas said, “Come to our house; we will recite the Name to you.” Shri Gusainji asked those two men all this, “What are you saying to Gopaldas?” Then they said, “Maharaj! Our wish is that you kindly recite the Name to us.” Then Shri Gusainji recited the Name to both of them and fulfilled them.

After that, Shri Gusainji said to Gopaldas, “You have indeed been accepted by Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, that is firm. The Lord will never abandon you. But as for those sevaks whom you have made by

reciting the Name to them, they will not all be ours. They will turn away from the Pushtimarg. Hearing this, all the Vaishnavas became the sevaks of Shri Gusainji and were fulfilled. And those who remained behind became fallen from the Pushtimarg. Shri Gusainji called them 'Gangoj.'" Thus, Gopaldas always remained absorbed in the state of viraha. Therefore, their story is told up to this point.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Just as water that is separated from the stream of Shri Ganga becomes separate water—this is sin-form for all people—touching it brings fault; so it happened here. In this it is shown that, after Gopaldas attained the Swami position, there came a ruin of life. Therefore, humility is a great substance. It accomplishes all fruits. And pride is a great obstacle—this is shown. Therefore, Gopaldas is such a Bhagavadiya, a grace-receiver of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, to whom Shri Govardhandhar reveals experience, He gave him to drink water from His own jug.

Varta 80 - Badarayandas Pushkarna

Now we tell the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Badarayandas, a Pushkarna Brahmin couple who lived in Morbi.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the divine play (Leela), he is the sakhi (companion) of Shri Lalitaji, and his name there is "Shrutiroopa." His wife's name is "Ganga."

Prasang 1 – Badarayandas Attains Shri Acharyaji's Grace

In Morbi, he was born in the house of a Pushkarna Brahmin. His parents named him Bada. Later, when he became a sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Shri Acharyaji gave him the name Badarayandas. At that time, Bada was thirteen years old. He was married in his own village. He and his wife lived in Morbi.

There was also a Brahmin from Gujarat named Vatsabhatt (Vats Bhatt). He used to live in Gujarat and earned his livelihood by reciting the Shrimad Bhagavat Katha. Once, Vatsabhatt was going to Dwarika to have the darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. On the way, he reached the village of Morbi. There, Badarayandas offered him hospitality and kept him in his home. Thus, Bada became known as a sevak of Vatsabhatt.

Later, at home, Badarayandas listened to the complete Bhagavat Katha from Vatsabhatt. Afterward, Vatsabhatt went on to Dwarika. Some days later, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu also came to Dwarika. When he arrived near the village of Morbi, he stopped at a garden outside the town. Then all the Vaishnavas of Morbi came to have Shri Acharyaji's darshan. Among them was Bada as well.

At that time, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu was narrating the Shrimad Subodhini commentary. When he explained the "Bhava Geet" section, Bada became so overwhelmed that he fainted. After about one watch (approximately three hours), he regained consciousness. Then Bada thought to himself, "When I heard the Bhagavat from Vatsabhatt, I did not experience such joy. But hearing it from Shri Acharyaji brought such divine ecstasy." Bada then bowed to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu and humbly said, "Maharaj! Please have mercy on me and make me

your sevak."

Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu replied, "You have already become the sevak of Vatsabhatt. How can you now become a sevak again? We cannot make you our sevak." Bada returned home and told his wife, "Shri Vallabhacharyaji has arrived. He is none other than the Lord Himself. While explaining the Bhava Geet, I was so overcome that I fainted. Later, I begged Him to make me His sevak, but He said, 'You are already Vatsabhatt's sevak, so I will not make you mine.' What should we do now? If Shri Acharyaji makes us His sevaks, our lives will be fulfilled in this very birth."

His wife said, "You did not request it properly. Take me to Him; I will make the request." Bada agreed and took his wife to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. When they arrived, Bada's wife bowed to Him and said, "Maharaj! My husband requested you to make him your sevak, but you did not. You have come to this world to uplift the fallen and the wretched like us. Please grant us refuge." Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "I did not do so because he is already the sevak of Vatsabhatt. How can he be a sevak again?"

Then the wife said, "Maharaj! Becoming the sevak of Vatsabhatt did not mean anything to us. Those Brahmins wander from place to place, narrating the Bhagavat for their livelihood. How can they uplift us? Please take us under your refuge and deliver us." Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu said, "It is already evening now. Tomorrow morning I will make you my sevaks. Go home for now." The couple bowed to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu and returned home. The next morning, both came again, bowed to Shri Acharyaji, and humbly said, "Maharaj! Please have mercy and grace our home by dining there."

Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu then came to Bada's house. Both husband and wife bathed, and Shri Acharyaji gave them new names and initiated them with Brahmasambandh (divine connection with God). Afterward, He accepted the meal they had lovingly prepared and performed bhog (offering). He gave Bada the name "Badarayandas," presented him with prasadi (blessed) clothes of Shri Navneetpriyaji, and entrusted them with Bhagavad seva. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu stayed in their home for two more days and then departed for Dwarika.

The couple also went to Dwarika along with Him. There, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu stayed for one year and one month. During that time, Badarayandas and his wife performed all kinds of seva—bringing water, cooking, washing the upper cloth (uparena), and daily

serving Shri Acharyaji with devotion. Pleased with them, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu told Badarayandas, “Now you both go home and perform Bhagavad seva together.”

Afterward, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu set out on a pilgrimage around the land of Bharat. Badarayandas and his wife returned to Morbi and began performing seva of the divine garments with deep love and devotion. Then Shri Navneetpriyaji began to reveal divine signs of affection towards them. Thus, both husband and wife of Badarayandas became such blessed recipients of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu’s grace that their story can hardly be fully told.

Varta 81 - Surdas

Now comes the story of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu’s sevak, Surdasji, a Saraswat Brahmin who lived in the village of Sihi near Delhi. The sentiment of his story is told below.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Surdasji, in the Divine Leela, is one of the eight companions (Ashtasakhas) of Shri Thakurji. Among them, he is the manifestation of “Krishna Sakha” (friend of Krishna). Here arises a doubt — in the Nikunj Leela (divine secret pastimes in the groves), the experience belongs to the sakhis, not the sakhas. So how could Surdasji, as Krishna Sakha, sing of the secret Leela without experiencing it? To this, it is said as described in the Bhagavata: when Shri Thakurji, along with his sakhas, goes to the forest for cow herding, all the gopis experience the Leela from within their homes and sing songs describing the forest pastimes. Later, when Shri Thakurji returns home in the evening from the forest, that night He performs Leela with the gopis in the Nikunj (groves). At that time, the intimate sakhas experience separation and sing of those Nikunj Leelas, thus gaining realization.

Therefore, it is said — the sakhis in the groves exist in two forms: one as male (sakhā) and one as female (sakhī). Hence, during the day the experience occurs through the sakha form, and at night through the sakhi form. Why so? Because the hymns (ṛcā) of the Vedas are the gopis, and the mantras of the Vedas are the sakhas. Although the gopis appear as women outwardly, they are not ordinary females; their husbands exist only in worldly appearance. Just as cooked food cannot sprout seeds in the ground, similarly, they are untouched by worldly desires. Thus, in that realm, the Divine Leela of rasa (blissful

essence) is eternally one and the same.

In this way, the intimate sakhas are part of Shri Thakurji's own limbs. Through both sakhi and sakha forms, they continuously experience the rasa of His Leela, day and night. Therefore, Surdas is the manifestation of Krishna Sakha, and the second form of Krishna Sakha in the Nikunj Leela is the sakhi named "Champakalata." Thus, Surdas received the complete realization of all the divine Leelas through the grace of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu.

Here arises another question — since Surdas was connected to Leela, why did he not have prior realization? Why did delusion arise in him? To this, it is said: Shri Thakurji manifests upon this earth and performs His Leelas in a human-like manner for the sake of revelation. These Leelas are sung in the world so that worldly beings may be fulfilled. Likewise, Shri Thakurji's devotees too manifest in the world, performing worldly Leelas to reveal the divine ones.

For example, when Shri Rukminiji, who is none other than Shri Lakshmiji herself, took birth, she worshiped Devi and asked for a boon, then sent a Brahmin to Shri Thakurji requesting marriage. This was all to reveal Leela to the world. Similarly, Kalindiji, born from the Sun, built a temple and performed penance in Shri Yamunaji's flow, telling Arjuna that she would only accept Shri Thakurji as her husband. Then Shri Thakurji Himself came and married her. These are merely Leelas, for she is eternally the beloved of the Lord.

In Braj, Shri Swaminiji (Radha) and Shri Thakurji (Krishna) are eternally one form. Yet to manifest the Braj Leela, Shri Thakurji appeared in the house of Shri Nandarayaji, and Swaminiji appeared in the house of Shri Vrishbhanuji. Through many efforts they manifested their divine union day and night, all for revealing Leela in this world. In reality, They eternally perform one blissful Leela. Similarly, Surdas, becoming a sevak of Shri Acharyaji, sang of the divine Leelas of Bhagavan, through which his Master's glory spread.

Such were the sevaks like Surdas, divine and devoted; their Master, Shri Acharyaji, should be sought as refuge. Thus, as Shri Thakurji manifested His human-like Leelas to spread His glory, through such worldly songs of Leela, the living beings attained realization of God.

Now, Surdasji appeared in this world, yet initially lacked the awareness of the Leelas. Near Delhi, four kos (eight miles) away, lies a village named Sihi, where King Parikshit's son Janamejaya once performed the serpent sacrifice (Sarp Yajna). In that very village, in

the home of a Saraswat Brahmin, Surdas was born. From birth, he had no eyes at all — not even the shape of eyes, only eyebrows above. Such was his physical form.

That Saraswat Brahmin already had three sons before him and lived in great poverty. Surdas was the fourth son. Seeing the child without eyes or eye sockets, the Brahmin became deeply worried and sorrowful. He lamented — “Fate has already made me poor, and now such a son is born! Who will serve him? Who will hold his hand and guide him with a stick?” He grieved greatly in his heart. People say, one who loses sight after birth is called blind (andh), but one born without eyes is called ‘Sur’ (seer). Yet, his parents and family did not feel affection for him, thinking, “How can a son without eyes be called our child?” No one even spoke to him.

Thus, time passed until Surdas reached the age of six. One day, his father received two gold coins (mohurs) as donation from a Kshatriya yajman. Delighted, he returned home and told his wife and children, “Today, God has given us two mohurs. Tomorrow, I’ll buy some provisions so we can manage for two to four months.” He showed everyone the two mohurs, tied them in a cloth, and placed them on a shelf before sleeping.

That night, a rat carried away the mohurs and dropped them into a hole in the thatch of the roof. In the morning, when he checked, the mohurs were gone. The parents beat their chests and cried bitterly in distress. They didn’t eat that day, lamenting endlessly. Seeing this, Surdas spoke gently to them: “Why are you grieving like this? Remember and chant the name of Bhagavan, and everything will become good.”

But his parents said, “You were born at an inauspicious hour! From the day you were born, sorrow has never left us. We’ve never had even one day of peace, nor a full meal. Even the two mohurs that Bhagavan gave us are gone.” Then Surdas said, “If you keep me in the house, I’ll tell you right now where your mohurs are. But after that, don’t stop me when I leave, and don’t cling to me.”

Hearing this, his parents said, “We don’t want anything else; just tell us where the mohurs are. Once we get them back, if you wish to leave, we won’t stop you.” Surdas replied, “There is a rat-hole in the roof beam; dig near its mouth, and you’ll find your mohurs.” The Brahmin did so and found them exactly there.

Now his parents began to have a change of heart. They said, “See!

Surdas is truly auspicious — his words brought back our coins." They told him, "Surdas, why do you wish to leave home now? Stay here until the grain bought with these mohurs lasts; then you can go wherever you wish." Surdas replied, "If you keep me in the house, your mohurs will again be lost and you'll suffer. Don't keep me here." Hearing this, his parents said nothing, and Surdas, taking a staff in hand, left home.

He walked from Sihi about four kos and came near a village with a pond outside it. He sat under a peepal tree, drank water from the pond, and stayed there until late afternoon. The landlord Brahmin of that village came there searching for his ten missing cows. Seeing Surdas sitting there, he asked, "My ten cows have been missing for three days. Whoever finds them will receive two cows as reward."

Surdas said, "Why do you ask me? Still, since you are asking, I will tell you — about a kos from here, in the next village, the landlord's men have taken your cows at night. In his courtyard, there is a second inner enclosure where his horses are tied; your cows are tied beside those horses."

The landlord took ten men with him, went there, and found his cows exactly as told. Bringing them back, he said to Surdas, “By your word I’ve found my ten cows. Please accept these two as yours.”

Surdas replied, “I have renounced my home and taken shelter only of Shri Thakurji. Why would I take your cows?” The landlord, thinking him a blind child, tried to advise him, saying, “Hey! You are the son of that Saraswat Brahmin. You have no eyes, no one to care for you — why did you leave your home and sit here alone? How will you live?”

Surdas replied, “I did not leave home relying on you. I left relying on Narayana. He who maintains the entire world will maintain me too. Whatever is destined will happen.” The landlord said, “I am also a Brahmin, and I have food in my house. Shall I bring some for you?” Surdas said, “I do not eat food brought from another’s house.”

The landlord went home, prepared puris, brought milk, and offered water to Surdas, saying, “Surdas, don’t grieve over anything. Wherever God gives me food, I will bring yours too. Tomorrow morning, I’ll build you a small hut here by the pond under this tree.”

In the morning, he came and asked, “Where would you like to stay?” Surdas said, “I wish to stay right here under this peepal tree by the pond.” So the landlord built him a small hut there and appointed a servant to attend him. He told ten or fifteen people, “This boy, Surdas, the son of that Brahmin, is very wise. He found my lost cows by his word alone. His intuition is pure. I’ve built him a hut under the peepal tree and sent him food daily. Whoever wishes to know omens or fortunes, go to him.”

Soon, many people from the village began visiting him. Whatever omen they asked about, his words proved true. Thus, Surdas became revered, and large crowds gathered daily. Food and offerings flowed abundantly. Within a short time, a large house was built for him near the pond, and his small hut was removed. He received fine clothes, wealth, and much honor. He became known as Swami Surdas, and many became his sevaks. Whoever wished to wear a Vaishnava neck bead (kanthi) became his sevak.

Surdas would sing songs of separation (viraha) to his sevaks, and they would sing them to the accompaniment of instruments. Thus, everything for kirtan was established there. For eighteen years, Surdas lived beneath that peepal tree by the pond. One night while resting, renunciation (vairagya) arose in his heart. He thought to himself, “I

left home to meet Shri Bhagavan, but here I've been caught in illusion (maya). Why should I seek to increase my own fame? Better that I increase the glory of my Lord. My purpose has been lost; I must now set it right and leave this place."

At dawn, he sent a sevak to call his parents, entrusted all household matters to them, and then, wearing a single cloth and carrying his staff, departed. Some sevaks who were worldly stayed behind, but those detached from the world went with him.

Surdas thought, "Braj is the abode of Shri Bhagavan; I should go there." So he journeyed to Mathura. Staying at Vishrant Ghat, he thought, "If I stay in Mathura, my fame will increase here too. This is the city of Shri Krishna, and I must not reveal my own greatness here. People, experiencing joys and sorrows, will come asking for omens, and the Mathura Brahmins (Choubes) will be troubled if my glory grows. Therefore, it is not right to stay here."

Thinking thus, Surdas left Mathura and came to the middle region between Mathura and Gaughat, where he built a small place on the banks of Shri Yamunaji and lived there. Surdas had a very sweet voice. He was skilled in singing and in interpreting omens. Many people began coming there as well, and numerous sevaks gathered around him. Thus, Surdas became famous throughout the world.

Prasang 1 – Surdas Meets Shri Acharyaji at Gau Ghat

When Surdas was residing at Gau Ghat, some days later, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu Himself was traveling from Adel toward Braj. After a few days, Shri Acharyaji arrived at Gau Ghat. At that time, a large gathering of sevaks was accompanying Shri Acharyaji. Together with all the Vaishnavas, Shri Acharyaji took a bath in Shri Yamunaji. Afterward, He performed His evening prayers and then went to prepare food. The sevaks too began to cook their own meals.

At that time, one sevak came to Surdas and said, "Surdasji! Today Shri Vallabhacharyaji has arrived here. He is the one who refuted Mayavada in Kashi and the South and established the path of devotion (Bhakti Marg)." Hearing this, Surdas told his sevak, "When Shri Vallabhacharyaji has finished His meal and is seated at ease upon His cushion and bolster, then come and inform me. I will go for Shri Vallabhacharyaji's darshan."

The sevak went and sat at a distance. When Shri Acharyaji had

finished His meal, seated Himself comfortably upon His cushion and bolster, and all the sevaks had gathered around Him, that sevak went and gave the news to Surdas. Then, at that very moment, Surdas took all his sevaks with him and came for Shri Acharyaji's darshan. He came and offered full prostration (sashtang dandvat) before Shri Acharyaji.

Then Shri Acharyaji said with His own divine mouth, “Sur! Sing something in praise of Bhagavan.” Surdas bowed before Shri Acharyaji and said, “Maharaj! As You command.” Then, before Shri Acharyaji, Surdas sang this pada (verse):

✿✿✿

राग धनाश्री –

हो ह र सब प ततन कौ नायक। को क र सके बराब र मेरी इते मानकौ लायक ॥१॥

जो तुम अजा मल सों कीनी सो पाती लख पाऊँ। होय वश्वास भलो िजय अपने और प तत बुलाऊँ ॥ २॥

स मट जहां तहाँ तें सब कोऊ आइ जूरे इकठोर। अबके इतने और मलाऊँ बेर दूसरी और ॥३॥॥

होडा होडी मन हुलास क र करे पाप भ र पेट। सबकों ले पायन त र पारों यही हमारी भेट।

ऐसी क तक बनाऊँ प्रानप त सु मरन व्ह भयो आड़ो । अबकी बेर नबेर लउ प्रभु 'सूर' प तत को टॉडो ।

Raag Dhanashri –

O Hari, You are the savior of all the fallen ones.

Who else can ever be equal to You or worthy of such honor? □1□

What You did for Ajamila — even that, if I try to write, cannot be fully described.

Having full faith in my own heart, I too call upon the fallen ones. □2□

From wherever they may be scattered, everyone gathers together and joins.

This time, I will bring together even more than before, from all other sides. □3□

People keep competing in boats, joyfully filling their hearts with excitement,

Sinning all day long while filling their bellies — yet I will take everyone across to the

other shore. This is my offering. O Lord of my life, may I build such devotion that

remembrance of You becomes my constant refuge. This time, O Lord, please settle

everything for good — ‘Soor’ begs You, rescue this fallen one. 4

✿✿✿

Then he sang another pada (verse). That pada is as follows:

✿✿✿

राग धनाश्री –

प्रभु हो सब प ततनकौ टीको । और प तत सब द्योस चा र के हों तो जन्मत ही कौ ।।

ब धक अजा मल ग नका तारी और पूतना ही को। मो ह छां ड तुम और उधारे मटे सूल क्यों जी कौ ।।

कोऊ न समरथ सुद्ध करन कों च कहत हों लीको। म रयत लाज 'सूर' प ततन में कहत सबै मो ह नीकौ ।।

Raag Dhanashri –

O Lord, I am the lowest amongst all the fallen ones. And if all the fallen ones of the four

kinds are counted, I belong to the lowest from birth itself. 1

You have liberated the hunter, Ajamila, the courtesan, and even Putana. If You save others

but leave me behind, what purpose would this life serve? 2

No one else has the power to purify such as me — yet I still speak of Your mercy. ‘Soor’

says, I would die of shame if, among all the fallen ones, I were not called the most

fortunate. 3

✿✿✿

Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji said to Surdas, “Sur! Why are you weeping in such a manner? Instead, describe some of Bhagavan’s divine Leelas.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The meaning of this is that when the jiva (individual soul) becomes separated from Shri Bhagavan, he becomes fallen. So what is the use of excessive lamentation about that? Rather, sing of Bhagavan's Leelas, by which the heart will be purified. Then Surdas humbly prayed to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! I do not understand anything about Bhagavan's Leelas." Then Shri Acharyaji said with His divine mouth, "Sur! Go and bathe in Shri Yamunaji, then return. I will make you understand."

Then Surdas joyfully went and bathed in Shri Yamunaji, and while still wet, he came to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji, out of grace, revealed to Surdas the Divine Name and afterward made him perform full surrender (samarpan). After that, Shri Acharyaji had already prepared the sequence (Anukramanika) of the Tenth Canto of the Bhagavata, and He recited it to Surdas.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): When Shri Acharyaji revealed the Ashtakshar Mantra to Surdas, all the defects of his previous births were destroyed, and seven kinds of bhakti (devotion) arose in him. After that, Shri Acharyaji performed Brahma Sambandh (initiation of divine relationship) for him, through which seven more bhaktis and the perfection of the ninefold bhakti (navadha bhakti) were achieved. Thus, the bhakti characterized by divine love (prema-lakshana) was established when Shri Acharyaji recited to him the Anukramanika (sequence) of the Tenth Canto. Then the complete Leelas of the Supreme Purushottama were established in the heart of Surdas, and the bhakti of divine love was perfected in him.

Thus, the entire knowledge of Shri Subodhiniji (Shri Acharyaji's commentary on the Bhagavata) was established by Shri Acharyaji in Surdas's heart. Then Surdas attained the power to describe the glories and Leelas of Bhagavan. From that Anukramanika, all the divine Leelas manifested within his heart.

How can this be known? Shri Acharyaji Himself composed the first verse (karika) of the Mangalacharan (auspicious invocation) in the Subodhiniji commentary on the Tenth Canto. That verse (shloka) is as follows:

✿✿✿

'नमा म हृदये शेषे लीलाक्षीरिाब्ध - शा यनं । लक्ष्मीसहस्र - लीला भः सेव्यमानं कला न धम ्॥'

I bow down in my heart to the One who rests upon Sheshanaga in the ocean of divine

play (the ocean of milk) — the treasure of all arts, who is served by thousands of

Lakshmis through their various divine pastimes.

✿✿✿

According to this Mangalacharan, Surdas composed and sang the following pada before Shri Acharyaji. That pada is as follows:

✿✿✿

राग बलावल –

चकईरी च ल चरन सरोवर जहां नहीं प्रेम वयोग। जहां भ्रम नसा हो त नहीं कबहू सो सायर सुख योग ॥

सनकसे हंस मीनसे गु नगन नख र व-प्रभा प्रकास। प्रफुिल्लत कमल न मष नहीं स स डर गुञ्जत नगम सुवास ॥

ि ज ह सर सुभग मिुक्त मुक्ताफल सुकृत वमल जल पीजे। सो सर छां ड कुबुद् ध वहङ्गम यहाँ र ह कहा कीजे॥

जहाँ श्रीसहस स हत नत क्रीडत सो भत´सूरजदास'। अब न सुहाय वषयरस छल्लर वा समुद्र की आस ॥

Raag Bilaval –

The chakairi bird has gone to the lake of the Lord’s feet, where there is no sorrow of

separation born of love. Where the dark night of delusion never falls — that ocean is the

meeting place of true bliss. 1

There, the sages like Sanaka are like swans, and the wise are like fish; the brilliance of

the Lord’s toenails shines like the rays of the sun. Lotuses bloom there without ceasing,

the moon knows no fear, and the fragrance of the Vedas gently fills the air. 2

In that beautiful lake, pure souls drink the crystal-clear waters of liberation and virtue

like pearls. But leaving that lake, what can the foolish bird of the mind do by staying

elsewhere? 3

Where Shri (Lakshmi) herself, along with countless forms, eternally plays — there shines ‘Soorajdas’. Now the taste of worldly pleasures, those trivial drops, no longer seem

sweet to me compared to that vast ocean. 4

✿✿✿

Thus, this pada was composed according to the karika (opening verse / shloka) of the Tenth Canto.

✿✿✿

"लक्ष्मीसहसलीला भः सेव्यमानं कला न धम ्।”

The treasure of all arts, who is served by thousands of Lakshmis through their divine

pastimes.

✿✿✿

Just as it is stated in the shloka, in the same way Surdas has expressed it in this pada.

✿✿✿

"जहाँ श्रीसहस्र स हत नत क्रीडत सो भत सूरजदास।"

Where countless forms of Shri (Lakshmi) eternally play — there shines Soorajdas.

✿✿✿

From what was expressed in that pada, it became clear that the entire Leela of Shri Subodhiniji had manifested within Surdas. Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji became very pleased and understood that Surdas had now gained realization of the Leelas. Then Shri Acharyaji, with His divine mouth, instructed Surdas, “Sur! Sing some Leela of Nandalaya (the house of Nanda).” Then Surdas sang a kirtan describing the celebration of Nanda Mahotsav. That pada is as follows:

✿✿✿

राग देवगंधार –

ब्रज भयो मह रके पूत जब यह बात सुनी। सु न आनन्दे सब लोग गोकुल ग नत गुनी ॥ ब्रज पूरव पूरे पून्य रूपी कुल

सु थर थुनी। ग्रह लग्न नक्षत्र ब ल सो ध कीनी वेदधुनी ॥१॥

सु न धाई सबे ब्रजना र सहज सङ्गार कये। तन पहरे नौतन चीर काजर नैन दये। क स कंचु क तलक ललाट

सो भत हार हये । कर कन कञ्चन थार मङ्गल साज लये ॥२॥

वे अपने अपने मेल नकसी भां त भली। मानो लाल मु ननकी पां त पंजरन चूर चली ॥ वे गावे मङ्गल गीत म ल

दश पाँघ अली। मानों भोर भयो र व दे ख फूली कनककली ॥३॥

उर अञ्चल उडत न जान्यो सारी सुरंग सुही। मुख मांडयो रोरीरंग सेंदुर माँग छुही। श्रम श्रवनन तरल तरोना बेनी

स थल गुहीं। सर बरखत कुसुम सुदेस मानो मेघ फुहीं ॥४॥

पय पहलें पहोंची जाय अ त आनन्द भरी। लई भीतर भवन बुलाय सब सस पाय परी ॥ एक वदन उघा र नहार त

दे त असीस खरी । चरजीयो यसोदानन्द पूरन काम करी ॥५॥

घ न घ न दवस घ न रा त घ न यह पहर घरी। घ न घ न मह रजु की कु ख मांग –- सुहाग भरी ॥ िजन जायो एसो

पूत सब सुख फलन फरी। थर थाप्यो सब प रवार मनकी सूल हरी ॥६॥

सुनी ग्वालन गाय बहो र बालक बो ल लये। गु ह गुञ्जा घ स बन – धातु अंग अंग चत्र ठये ॥ सर द ध माखन के

माट गावत गीत नये। डफ झांझ मृदंग बजावत सब नन्द भवन गये ॥७॥

एक नाचत करत कोलाहल छरकत हरद दहीं। मानों बरखत भादों मास नदी घृत दूध बही ।। जाको जहीं जहीं चत्त

जाय कौतुक तहींतहीं। रस आनन्द मगन गुवाल काहू बदत नहीं ॥८॥

एक धाइ नन्दजू पे जाइ पु न पु न पांय परे। एक आपु आप ह मांझ हैं स हँ स अङ भरे ॥| एक अंबर सब ह उता र त

नशङ खरे। एक.द च. रोचन और इध. सबन के सीस धरे ॥९॥

तब नन्द न्हाय भये ठाडे अरु कुश हाथ घरे। घ स चंदन चारु मँगाय वप्रन तलक करे ।| नान्दी मुख पतर पुजाय

अन्तर सोच हरे। वर गुरुजन द् वजन पहराय सबन के पाय परे ॥।१०॥

गन गया गनी न जाय तरुन सु बच्छ बढीं। नत चरे जमुना के काछ दूने दूध चढी ॥ खुर रूपे तांबे पीठ सोने सींग

मढीं। ते दीनी द् वजन अनेक हर ख अशीष पढी ॥ ११॥

सब अपने मत्र सुबन्धु हैं स हँ स बो ल लये। म थ मृगमद मलयकपूर माथे तलक कये ॥ उर म नमाल पहराय

वसन व चत्र दये। मानों बरखत मास अषाढ दादुर मोर िजये ॥१२॥

बर बन्दी मागध सूत आंगन भवन भरे। ते बोले लेले नाम हत कोउ ना बसरे ॥ िजन जो जाच्यो सो दीनो रस

नन्दराय ढरे। अ त दान मान परघान पूरन काम करे ॥१३॥

तब रो हनी अम्बर मँगाइ सारी सुरंग घनी। ते दीनी वधून बुलाय जेसी जाय बनी। वे अ त आनिन्दत बहो र नज ग्रह

गोपधनी । म ल नकसी दे त असीस रु च अपनी अपनी ॥१४॥

तब घरघर भे र मृदंग पटह नसान बजे। वर बांधी बंदनमाल अरु ध्वज कलस सजे ॥। तब ता दन तें वे लोग

सुखसंप त ना तजे। सु न 'सुर' सबनकी यह ग त जो ह र चरन भजे ॥१५॥

Raag Devgandhar –

When the news spread in Braj that the son of Nanda had been born,

All the people of Gokul, the wise and the simple alike, rejoiced in great delight. The entire land of Braj became filled with joy, its noble families firm in virtue.

Astrologers examined the planets, constellations, and auspicious moments, and the

Vedas were recited in celebration. □1□

Hearing the news, all the women of Braj came running, naturally adorned in beauty.

They wore fresh garments, darkened their eyes with kajal, and tied on shining bodices.

Their foreheads were adorned with tilak, necklaces gleamed on their hearts,

And in their hands and ears they carried golden trays with auspicious offerings. 2

They came forth in their groups, each in her own way, beautifully arranged —

Like flocks of red birds flying together, their joy bursting forth.

They sang songs of blessing in sweet harmony,

As if dawn had come and the golden buds of lotuses had bloomed on seeing the sun. 3

Their veils flew in excitement; their colorful saris glowed brightly.

Their faces shone with red powder and vermilion marked their hair partings.

Sweat glistened on their temples, their braids loosened,

And as flowers fell from their hair, it seemed as though clouds were showering

blossoms. 4

One woman, filled with love, reached Nanda's home first in immense joy.

She was called inside, bowed to the ground at Yashoda's feet,

Lifted her face and gazed upon the child, offering heartfelt blessings —

"May Yashoda's son live long and fulfill all desires!" 5

Many days, many nights, many moments passed in rejoicing.

Again and again they blessed Nanda's wife, saying, "May your fortune ever shine!"

To the one who gave birth to such a son came every happiness, every

fruit.

Their entire family was established in peace, and all pain of the heart vanished. □6□

Hearing the news, the cowherd women called their children and calves again and again.

They rubbed their limbs with fragrant forest herbs and minerals, painting their bodies

with color. Carrying pots of curd and butter on their heads, they sang new songs,

Beating drums, cymbals, and mridangs, all headed joyfully to Nanda's house. □7□

Some danced, creating joyous commotion, splashing turmeric and curd,

As if the month of Bhadon had come and rivers of milk and ghee were flowing!

Wherever their minds turned, there was wonder —

Immersed in bliss, the cowherds were lost in divine joy, and no one spoke a word. □8□

Some ran to Nanda himself, bowing again and again at his feet;

Others laughed among themselves, embracing one another in delight.

Some took off their upper garments, standing there freely,

While others applied sandalwood and saffron paste to everyone's heads. □9□

Then Nanda bathed and stood ready, holding sacred grass in hand.

He had fine sandalwood paste brought, and the Brahmins marked his forehead with

tilak.

He performed the rites of ancestors, the preliminary chants, removing all inner worry,

And dressed the elders and Brahmins respectfully, bowing at their feet. 10

The number of cows and calves given away in charity was countless.

Each day they grazed by the Yamuna, their milk doubling in abundance.

Their hooves gleamed like copper, their backs like gold, and their horns shone brightly.

Nanda gave them all to the Brahmins, who blessed him with joy. 11

He laughed and spoke kindly with all his friends and relatives.

He anointed their foreheads with musk and sandalwood,

Placed jeweled garlands upon their chests, and gave them beautiful clothes —

It was as if the monsoon had come, and frogs and peacocks were alive with song! 12

The bards, heralds, and singers filled the courtyards and halls,

Calling out blessings and praise so that no name would be forgotten.

Whatever anyone asked, Nanda generously gave — his house overflowed with gifts.

Through his charity and honor, all his wishes were fulfilled. 13

Then Rohini brought bright silk garments of deep colors.

She gave them to the newly arrived daughters-in-law, dressing them splendidly.

They were overjoyed and returned to their homes,

Giving their blessings to Yashoda with hearts full of love and grace. 14

Then, in every house, drums, mridangs, and trumpets sounded joyfully.

Marriage strings were tied, garlands hung, flags and pots were

decorated.

From that very day onward, the people of Braj never lacked happiness or prosperity.

‘Soor’ says — hearing this, know the blessed state of all who worship the feet of Hari.

15

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Thus, Surdas sang this great song of rejoicing. He first described the house of Shri Nandarayaji, and up to that point Shri Acharyaji Himself listened. But when Surdas began to describe the houses of the gopijanas, then Shri Acharyaji Himself, with His divine mouth, said to Surdas —

✿✿✿

'सुन सूर सबन की यह ग त जो ह र-चरन भजे ।'

Listen, Soor — this is the destiny of all who worship the feet of Hari.

✿✿✿

Then Shri Acharyaji Himself completed that line of the song about the offering (bhog) and made Surdas stop singing further.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): From this it is understood that the bliss of divine devotees (Braj bhaktas) is meant to be experienced within the hearts of those devoted to Bhagavan. If such inner experiences are expressed outwardly, they should be restrained — and so Shri Acharyaji stopped Surdas.

At that time, a thought also arose in Surdasji’s heart: “What will be the destiny of those who have become my sevaks?” Then Shri Acharyaji said, “Listen, Sur! The destiny of all is this — whoever worships the holy feet of Hari attains that supreme state.” Then Shri Acharyaji, being pleased, said, “It seems, Sur, that you are standing right within the Leela of Nandalaya itself! Such a kirtan you have sung.”

After that, Shri Acharyaji recited the 'Purushottama Sahasranama' (The Thousand Names of the Supreme Lord) to Surdas. Then all the Leelas of the entire Shrimad Bhagavatam manifested within the heart of Surdas.

Thus, Surdas sang kirtans describing the Leelas from the First Canto of the Bhagavata up to the Twelfth Canto — including many Daan Leelas (pastimes of offering) and Maan Leelas (pastimes of loving pride).

He described all such Leelas and pastimes. After that, Shri Acharyaji Himself remained at Gau Ghat for three days. During that time, all the sevaks whom Surdas had initiated were made sevaks of Shri Acharyaji by him.

After this, Shri Acharyaji Himself proceeded toward Braj, and Surdas too came to Braj along with Shri Acharyaji. First, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu arrived in Gokul. Then Shri Acharyaji said with His divine mouth, "Sur! Have a darshan of Shri Gokul." Then Surdasji offered full prostration (sashtang dandvat) to Shri Gokul. As soon as he bowed down, the Leelas of Shri Gokul manifested within Surdas's heart. Then Surdasji thought to himself, "How shall I describe the Leelas of Shri Gokul?"

The reason was that Shri Acharyaji's mind was absorbed in the divine form of Shri Navanitpriyaji (the Beloved of Butter). Therefore, Surdas composed and sang a pada describing Shri Navanitpriyaji's childhood Leela in Gokul. That pada is as follows:

राग बलावल –

सो भत कर नवनीत लए ॥ घुटुरुवन चलत रेनु तनु मं डत मुख द ध लेप कए ॥।१॥

चारु कपोल लोल लोचन छ ब गोरोचन कौ तलक दए। लट लटक न मानो मत्त मधुपगन मादक मधु हं पए ॥२॥

कठुला कण्ठ वज केह र - नख राजत हैं स ख रु चर हए। धन्य 'सूर' एको पल यह सुख कहा भयो सतकल्प िजए

॥३॥

Raag Bilaval –

He shines beautifully, holding fresh butter in His hand. Crawling on

His knees, His body

is adorned with dust, and His face is smeared with curd. 1

His charming cheeks and playful eyes gleam with beauty; His forehead bears a tilak of

bright gorochan. His curls sway like intoxicated bees drunk on sweet nectar. 2

Around His neck hangs a small ornament, and His lion-like nails glisten — O friend,

what a lovely sight for the heart! ‘Soor’ says — blessed is even a single moment of this

joy, compared to living for millions of ages! 3

✿✿✿

Hearing this pada, Shri Acharyaji Himself became very pleased with Surdas. After that, Surdas sang several more padas describing the divine childhood Leelas to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji thought, “The temple of Shri Govardhannathji has now been completed, and the arrangements for seva (worship) have also been established. Therefore, Surdas should be placed in the presence of Shri Nathji. From time to time, the kirtans must be arranged and performed. In the future, Vaishnavas will sing the padas of Surdas and attain great fulfillment.”

Thinking thus, Shri Acharyaji took Surdas along with Him and went to Shri Govardhan. There, ascending the hill, He had the darshan of Shri Nathji. Then Shri Acharyaji said with His divine mouth to Surdas, “Sur! Have a darshan of Shri Govardhannathji and sing a kirtan.” Then Surdasji had darshan of Shri Govardhannathji, and afterward, with great humility, he sang a pada of supplication (vijnapti).

That pada is as follows:

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राग धनाश्री -

अब मैं नाच्यो बहुत गोपाल, काम क्रोध को पह र चोलना, कंठ वषयन की माल, अब मैं नाच्यो बहुत गोपाल।

महामोह के नूपुर बाज़त, नंदा सबद रसाल, भरम भयो, मन भयो पखावज़, चलतअ असंग त

चाल, अब मैं नाच्यो

बहुत गोपाल।

तृष्णा नाद करत घट भीतर, नाना व ध दै ताल, माया को क ट फैंटा बांध्यो, लोभ तलक दयो भाल, अब मैं नाच्यो

बहुत गोपाल।

को टक कला काछी बखराई, जल थल सु ध नहीं काल, सूरदास की सबै अ वद्या, दूर करो नन्द लाल, अब मैं नाच्यो

बहुत गोपाल।

Raag Dhanashri –

O Gopal! Now I have danced enough. Wearing the garment of lust and anger, and putting

around my neck the garland of worldly desires, being overpowered by great delusion, I

find joy only in speaking ill of others. Thus, I kept dancing.

My mind, deluded by confusion, has itself become the drum (mridang). I walk in the gait

of bad company. The thirst of desires beats many rhythms within my heart.

I have tied the belt of illusion around my waist and placed the tilak of greed upon my

forehead.

For so long — I do not even remember how long — I have shown countless kinds of false

arts on land and in water. O Nandlal! Now please remove all the ignorance of Soordas.

✿✿✿

Surdasji sang this pada before Shri Nathji. Hearing it, Shri Acharyaji said to Surdas, “Surdas! Now there remains no ignorance within your mind. Your ignorance was already removed by Shri Nathji Himself. Therefore, now you should sing the divine Leelas of Bhagavan imbued

with greatness and loving devotion."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): All true devotees of Bhagavan speak in this same way — they always consider themselves humble and insignificant. This is the true characteristic of a devotee of Bhagavan. And whoever praises himself or boasts of his own greatness remains always turned away from Bhagavan.

Then, before Shri Acharyaji and Shri Govardhannathji, Surdasji sang kirtans filled with divine greatness and loving devotion. That pada is as follows:

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राग गौरी -

कौन सुकृत इन ब्रजबा सन कौ वदत बरिञ्च सव सेष । श्रीह र िजनके हेत प्रगटे मानुष-वेस ॥। धुवा। ज्यो त रूप

जग – धाम जगतगुरु जगत पता जगदीस। जोग जग्य जप तप व्रत दुलभ सो गृह गोकुल-ईस ॥ १॥

जाके उदर लोक त्रय, जल थल पञ्च तत्व चोखान । बालक है झूलत ब्रज पलना जसुम त भवन - नधान ॥।२॥

इकइक रोम कूप वराट सम आनन्द को ट ब्रह्मांड। लए उछग ता ह मात यसोदा अपने भ र भुज-दंड ॥।३॥

र व स स को ट कला सम लोचन त्र वध त मर भिज जात । अञ्जन देत हेत सुत के चक्षु लेकर काजर मात ॥४॥

क्ष त म त त्रपद करी करुनामय ब ल छ ल दयो है पतार। देहरी उलं ध सकत नहीं सो प्रभु खेलत नन्द के द्वार

॥५॥

अनु दन सवत सुधारस पञ्चम चन्ताम न सी धेनु। सो त्यिज जसुम त कौ पय पीवत भक्तन को सुख देनु ॥६ ॥

वेद वेदान्त उप नषद् षटरस अरपे भुगते ना हं। सो ह र ग्वाल बाल मंडल में हैं स हैं स जूठ न खा हं ॥७॥ कमलानायक वैकुण्ठ दायक सुख दुख िजनके हाथ। कांध कम रया हाथ लकु टया नग्न पद, बहरत बन बच्छ साथ

॥८॥

करन हरन प्रभुदाता भुक्ता वश्वम्भर जग जा न। ता ह लगाइ माखन की चोरी बौध्यौ नन्दजू की रा न ॥९॥

बकी बकासुर सकट तृणावत अघ धेनुक वृषभास। कंस केसी को यह ग त दीनी राखे चरन नवास ॥ १०॥

भक्त बछल ह र प तत उद्धारन रहे सकल भ रपूर । मारग रो क परचो ह र- द्वारे प तत सरोम न 'सूर' ॥।११॥

Raag Gauri –

What great merit must these residents of Braj possess — even Brahma, Shiva, and Shesh

speak of it in wonder! For whose love Shri Hari Himself appeared in human form.

□(Dhruva Refrain)□

He who is the Light of all lights, the abode of the universe, the teacher, the father, and the

Lord of all creation — That same One, whom yoga, sacrifice, meditation, penance, and

vows cannot attain — now dwells in the home of Gokul's Lord. □1□

In whose belly rest the three worlds, the land, water, and all five elements in pure form

— That very Child swings in a cradle in Braj, in the house of Yashoda, the treasure of all

worlds. □2□

Each pore of whose body holds a vast universe, a countless ocean of bliss — That very

Infinite Lord is now lifted playfully by Mother Yashoda in the circle of her arms. □3□

His eyes, radiant like millions of suns and moons, dispel all three kinds of darkness —

Yet His mother lovingly applies kajal (collyrium) to those eyes for His protection. □4□

He who measured the earth and heaven in three strides, the merciful Lord who deceived

Bali for his own good — That same Lord now plays at Nanda's doorstep, unable to even

cross the small threshold! □5□

He who daily drinks the essence of all nectar, the wish-fulfilling gem among cows —

Has now abandoned it all, and drinks Yashoda's milk, giving bliss to His devotees. □6□

He whom the Vedas, Vedanta, and Upanishads offer the six tastes of divine offerings but

cannot satisfy — That same Hari now laughs and eats the leftover food of His cowherd

friends! □7□

The Lord of Lakshmi, the giver of Vaikuntha, in whose hands lie both joy and sorrow — Now walks barefoot in the forest, with a stick on His shoulder and a cowherd's wrap on

His body, tending calves. 8

The Lord, who gives hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind, and sustenance to the world

— To Him, the Queen of Nanda's house scolds lovingly, calling Him a butter thief! 9

The slayer of Baka, Bakasura, Sakatasura, Trinavarta, Agha, Dhenuka, and Arishta —

He granted this fate to Kansa and Keshi as well, yet keeps His devotees safe at His feet.

10

Hari, the protector of His devotees and savior of the fallen, is overflowing with

compassion. 'Soor' says — He stops all other paths and reveals Himself at His own

doorway to the crown jewel of sinners! 11

✿✿✿

Hearing this pada, Shri Acharyaji Himself became very pleased.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason for His joy was that Surdasji had sung this kirtan exactly in accordance with the way Shri Acharyaji had revealed the Path of Grace (Pushtimarg). What is the true nature of Shri Acharyaji's path? It is devotion that combines awareness of the Lord's greatness (mahatmya) with steadfast, loving affection (sneh), placing that love above all else — and this is most dear to Shri Thakurji.

However, the jiva must first maintain awareness of the Lord's greatness. Why? Because without mahatmya, the fear of committing offense disappears. Therefore, in the beginning stage, love imbued with awareness of the Lord's greatness is necessary. But the loving affection of the devotees of Braj (Braj bhaktas) is supreme. In comparison to their love, the sense of the Lord's greatness does not

remain. Shri Thakurji, overcome by love, follows behind His devotees. Thus, until such love is attained, one should uphold the awareness of mahatmya.

If someone, under the name of love, abandons reverence for the Lord's greatness and behaves casually before Him — sitting, speaking, or turning his back — he becomes fallen. Therefore, one must keep in mind the Lord's greatness and act with fear of committing offenses; then the Lord's grace flows. When supreme love (sneh) arises, it is such a substance that it naturally frees one from the need to maintain awareness of the Lord's greatness.

In the Tenth Canto it is described that Shri Bhagavan repeatedly revealed His divine greatness (mahatmya) to the devotees of Braj and to Mother Yashoda — by performing the slaying of Putana, Sakatasura, and Trinavarta; by liberating the twin Arjuna trees; and by subduing Bakasura, Dhenuka, and Kaliya. Through all these Leelas, He showed His divine power. Yet, the loving affection of the devotees of Braj is supremely wonderful and indescribable. Because of that love, no sense of divine greatness or Godhood remained. Such love is granted by the grace of the Lord Himself — and through it, awareness of His greatness naturally falls away.

But one whose love is attached to husband, wife, children, family, wealth, or the pleasures of his own body — and who, abandoning the Lord's greatness, follows worldly conduct — becomes an offender to Shri Bhagavan. Therefore, one should perform seva with reverence according to the injunctions of the Vedas and with fear of offending Shri Thakurji, always remaining cautious.

This is the way of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's path. Therefore, one should cultivate love that is combined with awareness of the Lord's greatness. And what is love combined with awareness of mahatmya? It is to remain alert in seva according to the time and season — that is what is called mahatmya-yukta sneh.

Afterward, Shri Acharyaji Himself said, "Sur! The doctrine of the Path of Grace (Pushtimarg) has now borne fruit within you. Therefore, at Shri Govardhan, you should perform kirtans from time to time." At that time, the Lord had already accepted the bhog (food offering). Then, Surdas sang kirtans of loving pride (maan). Those padas are as follows:

राग बहागरो -

बोल त काहे न नाग र बैनां। तो ह मलनकों बहुत करत हैं ग रधरलाल कमल-दल नैनां ॥१॥।

जब तें दिृष्ट परी मोहन की बसरयो गृह-सुख सेनां। रटत 'सूर' राधे राधे क ह कहूँ बनमाल कहूँ उपरेनां ॥२॥

Raag Bihagro –

O fair lady, why do you not speak? Giridhar Lal, with lotus-like eyes, has been longing

greatly to meet you. 1

From the moment your eyes met those of Mohan, you forgot all the comforts of home

and family. ‘Soor’ says — you keep chanting “Radhe Radhe,” sometimes calling Him

“Banmali,” sometimes just “My Beloved.” 2

राग बहागरो -

सुखद सेज मेंपोढे र सकवर रसमय अङ्ग संग जाय रेन जागे हैं। स थल बसन भूषन अलक छ ब सोहे मुख मुखसों

लपट उर लागे हैं ॥१॥

झुकझुक आवें नयन आलस झलक रह्यो लटपटी बात कहत अ त अनुरागे हैं। 'सूरदास' नन्दसुवन तुम्हारो यस

जानो प्रान प्रया सुख ही में रस पागे हैं ॥२॥

Raag Bihagro –

On a bed of bliss they lie, the Lord of Ras and His beloved, their divine forms full of

sweetness, awake together through the night. Their garments, ornaments, and loose

curls glow beautifully; face to face, they cling to each other’s hearts. 1

Their eyes droop softly with drowsiness, their words entwined with tender love.

‘Soordas’ says — O son of Nanda, may the world know that Your dearest Radha finds her

very essence of joy in Your love alone. □2□

राग बहागरो -

पोढे लाल रा धका उर लाय । नवकुसुम अरु नवल सज्या नव चतुर दोऊ राय ॥१॥

गान करत सहचरी द्वारें सरस राग जमाय।'सूर प्रभु ग रघरन संग सुख रह्यो उर लपटाय ॥२॥

Raag Bihagro –

The Beloved lies in Radha’s embrace, the two — newly blossomed like fresh flowers —

rest upon a bed decked with new blooms. At the doorway, the sakhis sing sweet songs,

filling the air with melodious tunes. ‘Soor’ says — the Lord of Giriraj dwells in bliss,

clasped close to the heart of His beloved.

✿✿✿

After that, in this same manner, Surdasji composed and sang thousands of kirtans — beginning from the morning awakening (mangal) up to the completion of the Lord’s meal (seva and bhog).

Prasang 2 – Surdasji Teaches the Lesson of Wasting Human Life

Once, Surdasji was walking on the path along with five or seven Vaishnavas. On the way, ten or fifteen men were playing a game of dice. They were so deeply absorbed in that game that they were unaware of anyone passing by on the path.

Seeing them so engrossed in the game, Surdasji sang a verse before the Vaishnavas who were with him. Then, Surdasji said to those Vaishnavas, “Look, this being is wasting his human birth in vain. Shri Bhagwan has given the human body for the purpose of performing His bhajan (devotional worship). Yet, this being is wasting that body in useless activities. In worldly terms, such a person is condemned as a gambler; and in spiritual terms, he is one who has turned his face away from God.

The Lord has given this precious human body for the sake of devotion to Him — such people should not spend it on playing dice.” At that time, Surdasji composed and sang the following verse to the Vaishnavas who were with him:

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राग केदारो –

मन ! तू समझ सोच वचार । भिक्त बना भगवान दुलभ कहत नगम पुकार॥।

साधु संग त डार पासा फे र रसना सार । दाव अबके पय पूरो, उत र पेली पार ॥

छां ड सत्रह सुन अठारे, पंच ही को मार । दू र ते तिज तीन काने चमक चोंक बचार ॥।

काम क्रोध मद लोभ भूल्यो ठग्यो ठ गनी ना र । 'सूर' ह र के पद भजन बन चल्यो दाउ कार झार ॥।

Raag Kedaro –

O mind! Understand, think, and reflect. Without devotion, the Lord is difficult to attain

— so proclaim the Vedas aloud.

Keep the company of saints, cast away the dice, and make your tongue speak the essence

(the Lord's name). This time the full stake has fallen — cross over to the other shore.

Abandon the seventeen and listen to the eighteen; strike down the five (senses). From

afar, give up the three crooked paths — shine, awaken, and reflect.

You have been deluded by lust, anger, pride, greed, and deceived by the cheating woman of illusion. Says Sur — without devotion to the feet of Hari, your turn (in life's game) has

gone in vain, swept away like a useless throw of the dice.

✿✿✿

So, on hearing this, those Vaishnavas said to Surdas: "O Surdasji! This verse is not understood. Please explain the meaning to us, then we will understand." Then Surdasji said to those Vaishnavas:

"O— three things are needed in the game of chopad (dice): understanding, reflection, and deliberation. These same three things are needed in the bhajan of the Lord. Why? — just as one first understands and then plays the chopad, so likewise one will then know the Lord and perform devotion.

In chopad there is the thought: 'If this piece falls into the trap, then I will win.' In the same way, if this being thinks of time/death (kāl), then that being will go to the refuge of the Lord. And the third thing, deliberation — this is the thinking about which group of pieces to place on the trap, how much stake to wager, 'this will not be lost here,' etc. In the same way the Vaishnav should deliberate: 'Is this action I am doing good or bad?' Then that being will leave bad deeds and follow the conduct of divine dharma.

And when a trap-stake is placed in chopad, people on both sides cry out. In the same way, the scriptures of the world — the Vedas and the Puranas — say and proclaim that without devotion the Lord is difficult to attain; therefore perform countless spiritual practices. And when in chopad one meets companions, the chopad is played together; likewise, in devotion to the Lord, when there is the company of Godly Vaishnavs, devotion increases.

And the one who plays chopad keeps his mind on his stake — ‘if this stake falls I will win’ — in the same way with the tongue this being should fix its mind on the Lord’s discourse, and speak all the ras in essence form (that is, the Lord’s name). And just as in chopad when a beautiful full stake goes across one then returns home and the fear of death vanishes, so likewise the human body is a full stake to cross the world; by great piety one obtains it, so take refuge in this body and cross the world to the Lord. ‘Rakhi satre, suni athare’ — in chopad the big stakes are seventeen and eighteen. In the same way the world has all the Puranas, so keep them and listen to the eighteen — that is, listen to the Shrimad Bhagavat and take the Puranas to heart.

And the five senses — the five great sources of ignorance (panchaparvā avidyā) — kill them. Why? — because the words of the shastra say that—

✿✿✿

पतंग - मातंग कुरंग भ्रंग-मीना हताः ष भरेव पच। एकः प्रमादी स कथं न हन्यते यः सेवते षच भरेव पच ॥। १॥।

The moth, the elephant, the deer, the bee, and the fish — each of these five creatures are

destroyed by one of the five senses. How then can that foolish man, who serves all five

senses together, not be destroyed?

✿✿✿

The moth dies through the sense of sight when it falls into the flame. The elephant dies through the sense of touch. The deer dies through the sense of hearing. The bee dies through the sense of smell. The fish dies through the sense of taste.

Each of these dies by being overcome by only one sense. But man indulges in all five senses — therefore, surely death will devour him. So destroy these five just as one strikes the pieces in the game of dice.

And in the game of dice, the smallest stake is called “three ears,” which no one desires. In the same way, the three qualities — tamas (ignorance), rajas (passion), and sattva (goodness) — are the attributes of maya. The entire world is caught in that snare; therefore, with wisdom, cast it away.

Wisdom means that after casting them off, one should not turn to look at them again. Just as in the game of dice one forgets everything and is deceived, in the same way lust, anger, and other entanglements are traps, and womanly form is the divine illusion of the Lord. This illusion deceives the whole world.

And just as after losing in the game of dice a player claps his hands together and walks away, in the same way, without devotion to the lotus feet of Shri Thakurji, this human being loses his body — having done nothing good nor performed any act of kindness. In this way, when the Vaishnavas heard this, they became greatly pleased with Surdas.

Prasang 3 – When Shri Acharyaji Saw Surdas

Whenever Shri Acharyaji saw Surdas, he would say, “Come, O Sursagar!” The meaning of this is that just as in the ocean all kinds of treasures are contained, in the same way, Surdas has composed thousands upon thousands of verses. In these verses, he has described various topics such as knowledge, detachment, and the many distinctions within devotion, as well as the divine pastimes of numerous incarnations of the Lord. Later, people began to learn and sing his verses here and there. Once, at one such time, Tansen learned one of Surdas’s verses and sang it before Emperor Akbar. That verse was:

✿✿✿

राग नट –

यह सब जानो भक्त के लच्छन । कोऊ नन्दो कोऊ बन्दो कोऊ मा र लेहु धन गच्छन ॥१॥।

कोऊक आ न लगावत चन्दन डा र धू र कोऊ देत है भच्छन । कोऊ कहे मूरख महा अधम कोऊ कहे यह बड़ो

वलच्छन ॥२॥

भली बुरी मनमें नहीं आवे कृष्ण चरन र त टरे न एक छन । 'सूर' सुख दुःख िजनको न हं ब्यापे तनको ग रधर

मले तत छन ॥३॥

Raag Nat –

Know these as the signs of a true devotee. Whether someone insults, praises, beats, or

takes away wealth and possessions — he remains the same. □1□

One person applies sandal paste, another throws dust; one offers food, another calls him

a fool or a great sinner; someone else says he is very strange. □2□

Good or bad thoughts never enter his mind, and his love for Krishna's feet does not waver even for a moment. 'Soor' says — those who remain untouched by joy and sorrow

attain Giridhar (Shri Krishna) at that very moment. □3□

✿✿✿

Hearing this, Emperor Akbar said, "If one could meet such a devotee who has these divine qualities, how wonderful that would be!" Tansen then said, "The one who has sung this kirtan lives in Braj, and his name is Surdas."

Hearing this, a thought arose in the emperor's mind — that somehow, by any means, he should meet Surdas. Later, the emperor traveled from Delhi to Agra. Then he told his messengers, "In Braj, Surdasji sings songs in praise of Shri Nathji. Find out exactly where he is and send me the news in Shri Mathura — but make sure that Surdas does not come to know about this."

Then those messengers went to Shri Nathji's temple and gathered information. There they heard that Surdasji had gone to Mathura. So those messengers went to Shri Mathura and quietly kept Surdas in their sight to know where he was sitting at that time. Then those messengers went back and informed the emperor, saying, "Your Majesty! Surdasji is in Mathura." Then Emperor Akbar sent four or five men to call Surdas.

Surdasji came before the emperor. The emperor showed him great respect and honor. After that, the emperor said to Surdasji, "O Surdasji! You have composed many songs in praise of Lord Vishnu. Please sing something for me." Then Surdas sang this verse before Emperor Akbar. That verse was:

✿✿✿

राग बलावल –

मनरे !तू क र माधौं सौं प्री त। काम क्रोध मद लोभ मोह तू छां ड सकल वपरी त। भौरा भोगी बन

अमेरे मोद न माने

माप। सब कुसुमन क नीरस करे रे कमल बधावे आप ॥ १॥

सु न पर मत प्रय-प्रेमकी रे चातक- चतवे वा र । धन आसा सब दुःख सहेरे अनत न जाचे द्वा र ॥ २॥।

देखहू करनी कमलकी रे कीनो र वसों हेत। प्रान तजे प्रेम ना तजै रे सूक्यो सर ही समेत ॥३॥

दीपक पीर न जान ही रे पावक परे पतङ्ग। तन तो त ह ज्वाला जरयो रे चत न भयो रस भंग ॥ ४॥

मीन वयोग न स हत सकेरे, नीर न पूछे बात। दे ख जू तू ताकी ग त रे र त न घटे तन जात ॥ ५॥।

परन परेवा प्रेमकी रे चत ले चढत अकास । तहां च द ता ह जू दे ख हीरे भूपर लेत उसास ॥६॥।

सु मर सनेह कुरंग कौ रे श्रवन न राच्यो राग। ध र न सक्यो पग पछमनो रे सरसन्मुख उर लाग ॥। ७॥।

दे ख करनी जड ना रकी रे जरत प्रेत के संग। चता न चत फीको भयो रे राची पयके संग ॥८॥।

लोक वेद बरजे सबे रे नेनन देखे त्रास । चोर न िजय चोरी तजे रे सब तन सहत वनास ॥९॥।

सब रस कौ रस प्रेम है रे वषई खेले सार। तन-मन-धन जोबन खस्यो रे तोऊ न माने हार।।१०॥

तें रतन पायो भलो रे जान्यो साधन साध । प्रेमकथा अनु दन सुनी रें तोउ न उपनी लाज ॥११॥।

सदा संगाती आपुनो रे िजयके जीवन प्रान । सो वसरयो तू सहज ही रे ह र ईश्वर भगवान ॥१२॥

वेद पुरान सुमरे सबे रे सुरतरू सेवत जा ह। महा मोह अज्ञान में रे क्यों न सम्हारे ता ह ॥१३॥

खग मृग मीन पतंग लोरे मैं सोधे सब ठौर। जलथल जीव िजते कते रे कहों कहाँ ल ग और ॥ १४॥

प्रभु पूरन पावन सखा रे प्राननहू के नाथ। परम दयाल कृपाल कृपा न ध जीवन जाक हाथ ॥ १५॥।

गभवास अ त नास में रे जहाँ न एको अंग। सु न सठ तेरे प्रानप त रे तहाँ हु न छाँडयो संग॥। १६॥।

दन रात पोषत रहे रे जैसे चोली पान । वा दुःख तें तो ह का ढ के रे गहे दीनो पयपान॥। १७॥

िज ह जड तें चेतन कयो रे र च गुन तत्व नधान । चरन चकर कर नख दये रे नैन ना सका कान ॥१८॥

असन बसन बहु ब ध दए रे औसर औसर आन । माता-पता भैया मले रे नइ रु च नइ पहचान ॥

१९॥

सजन कुटुम्ब प रकर बढयो रे सुतदारा धन धाम । महा मोह वषयी भयो रे चत्त आक काम ॥२०॥

खानपान प रधान में रे जोबन गयो सब बीत । ज्यों वट पर तय संग बस्यो रे भोर भये भयभीत ॥ २१॥

जैसे सुख ही धन बढ्यो रे तैसे तन ह अनंग। धूम बढ्यो लोचन खरयो रे सखा न सूयो संग ॥ २२॥।

जब जान्यो सब जग मूओ रे बाढयो अयस अपार । बीच न काहू तब कयो रे जमदूतन दीनी मार ॥ २३॥

को जाने के वार मूओरे ऐसो कुम त कुमीच । ह रसों हेत बसा रके सुख चाहत है नीच ॥२४॥

जो पै िजय लज्जा नहीं रे कहा कहों सौ बार ।ऐको अंग ते न ह र भज्यो रे सु न सठ 'सूर' गँमार ॥२५॥

Raag Bilawal –

O mind! Love Madhav (Shri Krishna). Give up lust, anger, pride, greed, and delusion — all

these wrong tendencies. You are like a bumblebee wandering for pleasures — but you

find no true joy. You make all flowers tasteless and ruin even the lotus you land upon.

□1□

Hearing of the boundless love of the beloved, the chatak bird longs only for rainwater. It

endures every hardship and does not go to any other door for water. □2□

See the nature of the lotus — it has love for the sun. It gives up its life but never gives up

its love; it dries up along with the lake itself. □3□

The moth knows not the pain of the flame; it flies straight into the fire. Its body burns in

the blaze, yet its heart’s delight is not disturbed. □4□

The fish cannot bear separation from water, nor can it ask water to stay; see its state —

even when dying, its love does not lessen. □5□

The bird caught in love soars into the sky with the heart of its mate; seeing her there, it

sighs even as it descends to earth. □6□

Remember the deer enchanted by love — its ears are filled with melody; it cannot turn

back its steps and falls upon the hunter's arrow. □7□

See the foolish woman's act — she burns herself on the pyre with her dead husband.

Even in those flames her heart does not fade, for it is devoted to her beloved. □8□

The world and the scriptures all forbid such acts, and eyes tremble to see them; yet the

thief of hearts does not abandon the theft — though the body perishes. □9□

Among all forms of taste, love is the truest essence; sensual pleasures are but playthings.

Body, mind, wealth, and youth may all be lost, yet love does not yield. □10□

You have found such a rare jewel — the true means and purpose of life. Though you hear

daily the tales of divine love, still you feel no shame. □11□

He who has ever been your own true companion — the very life of your soul — you have

forgotten Him so easily, O heart! That Hari, that Lord, that God. □12□

All the Vedas and Puranas remember Him; even the gods go to serve that wish-fulfilling

tree (the Lord). Yet in great delusion and ignorance, why do you not

remember Him? 13

Birds, beasts, fish, and moths — I have seen them all. All creatures of land and water —

tell me, where else shall I look for an example? 14

The Lord, the all-perfect, pure friend, the protector of all lives — He, the most

compassionate, merciful ocean of grace — life itself is in His hands. 15

In the womb, where there was no limb or form, still, O foolish one, your Lord of life did

not abandon you even there. 16

Day and night He nourished you, as betel leaf encloses the nut. From that pain He drew

you out and gave you milk to drink. 17

He made the inert conscious and filled you with the treasure of qualities and elements;

He gave you feet, nails, eyes, nose, and ears. 18

He provided food, clothing, and countless comforts at every time; He gave you parents

and brothers, yet you feel no gratitude, no recognition. 19

He increased your family and wealth — relatives, wife, children, and home — but you

became entangled in great delusion and sensual desire. 20

In eating, dressing, and pleasures, your youth has passed away. Like one who sleeps

beside a serpent, you now wake in fear at dawn. 21

As your wealth grew, your body weakened; your vision dimmed, your friends vanished

from sight. 22

When you realized that the whole world was perishing, it was too late — vast darkness

grew around you. There was no one in between, and the messengers of death struck you.

॥23॥

Who knows whose turn to die comes next? Such is your evil and foolish thinking.

Forgetting love for Hari, you desire worldly pleasure, O wretched one. ॥24॥

If you feel no shame in your heart, what more can be said, a hundred times over? You

have not worshiped Hari with even a single limb — listen, O fool, says Soor, you are truly

ignorant. ॥25॥

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This verse is such that when one keeps it in remembrance, divine grace arises, and the mind attains true understanding. Detachment from the world develops, and the mind becomes absorbed in the lotus feet of Shri Bhagavan. Then, fear of bad company arises, and the heart is drawn toward the company of the virtuous. Attachment to the body and worldly things diminishes, and worldly desires are released. The love that one feels for Bhagavan is supernatural — it is beyond this world. Therefore, one's devotion and affection toward Him increase.

Hearing this, the emperor became very pleased. Then, a thought arose in his mind — "Let me test Surdasji. If he truly takes refuge in Bhagavan, he will not sing in my praise." Thinking thus, the emperor said to Surdas, "Shri Bhagavan has granted me this kingdom, and all the learned and noble people sing in my praise. I reward them with many riches and gifts. You too are a learned person, so sing something in my praise as well. Whatever your heart desires, you may ask for it, and it shall be granted." Thus spoke the emperor. Then Surdas sang this verse:

राग केदारो -

ना हन रह्यो मन में ठौर। नन्दनन्दन अछत कैसे आ नए उर और ॥१॥

चलत चतवत दवस जागत सुपन सोवत रा त। हृदय तें वह मदन मूर त छन न इत उत जा त ॥ २॥

कहत कथा अनेक उधो लाख लोभ दखाय । कहा करों चत्त प्रेम पूरन घट न सन्धु समाय ॥ ३॥

स्याम गात सरोज आनन ल लत ग त मृदु हास। 'सूर' ऐसे दरस को ये मरत लोचन प्यास ॥४॥

Raag Kedaro –

There is no place left in my mind for anything else. How can I bring anyone other than

Nand's son (Krishna) into my heart? □1□

While walking or watching during the day, or dreaming and sleeping at night — that

beautiful form of Madan (Krishna) never leaves my heart even for a moment. □2□

Uddhav tells many stories and shows countless reasons, but what can I do? The love in

my heart is overflowing — yet this vessel cannot contain the ocean of love. □3□

Shyam's dark body, lotus-like face, graceful movements, and gentle smile — 'Soor' says,

my eyes are dying of thirst for such a vision. □4□

✿✿✿

Hearing this verse, the emperor thought to himself, "Why would he sing my praise? If he desired any reward or wealth, he would praise me. But he is a devotee of the Supreme Lord — he will only sing the glories of God." In that kirtan, in the last line, Surdasji had sung: "O Sur! These eyes die of thirst for such a divine vision." Then the emperor said to Surdas, "Surdas! You do not have eyes — so how can they die of thirst? Why did you say this?"

Surdasji replied, "What do you know about this matter? These eyes are common to all, but who among them truly thirsts for the sight of

the Lord? The eyes that thirst for the vision of Shri Bhagavan — those eyes always remain with Him. They constantly drink the nectar of His divine form and yet die every moment of longing. That is what I meant."

Hearing this, Emperor Akbar said, "His eyes indeed belong to the Lord Himself. They see only God, and no one else." Then the emperor desired to reward Surdas for his wisdom. He began offering him several villages and a great deal of wealth, but Surdas accepted nothing. Then Emperor Akbar said to Surdasji, "Baba Sahib! Please at least give me one command." Surdasji replied, "From today onward, never again call me or try to meet me."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Emperor Akbar was discerning and wise. Why so? Because he had become a mlechchha (non-Hindu) after falling from the path of yoga in a previous birth. In that former life, he had been a Brahmachari named Bālmukund. One day, he drank milk that had not been filtered, and a cow's hair went into his stomach. Because of that offense, he was born as a mlechchha in this life. After that, Akbar bowed down to Surdas and took his leave.

Prasang 4 – Later, Soordas Came to the Door of Shrinathji

Later, the ruler of the land came to Agra and began to search for the verses (pads) of Soordas. He announced that whoever would bring the verses of Soordas would be given rupees and gold coins (mohurs). Those verses were written in Persian and read aloud. Out of greed for those coins, a scholar and poet named Kavishwar also composed verses pretending they were written by Soordas and brought them forward.

Then Emperor Akbar said to him, "These verses do not belong to Soordas. You are stealing verses for the sake of money." The scholar Kavishwar replied, "How can you be sure that these are not the verses of Soordas? These are indeed Soordas's own verses."

Then the Emperor had one of Soordas's genuine verses written down on his own paper. And the scholar Kavishwar made a copy of Soordas's signature mark (seal) and brought it. The Emperor then placed both papers in water and said, "If God is true, then let justice be done in this matter."

After saying this, both papers were placed in the water. The paper that had the verse forged by the scholar Kavishwar became soaked, while the paper that had Soordas's genuine verse did not get wet at all.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this way, those who have attained God through divine grace — their words and verses, when sung, can help others cross over the ocean of worldly existence. But those who, out of cleverness, sing worldly poems or compositions made by ordinary human minds will drown in this very ocean. Then all the scholars and poets felt ashamed, bowed their heads low, and went back to their homes. Thus, Soordasji was one of those divine souls who were supremely graced by Shri Acharyaji.

Prasang 5 – Soordas's Seva of Kirtan for Shrinathji

So these Soordasji performed the seva (devotional service) of singing kirtans for Shrinathji for many years. From time to time, when Kumbhandasji and Paramananddasji came to the kirtan gathering, Soordasji would visit Shri Gokul for the darshan of Shri Navneetpriyaji.

One day, when Soordasji came to Shri Gokul, he sang many verses about the divine childhood pastimes (bal-leela) of the Lord. Hearing these, Shri Gusainji became very pleased. Then Shri Gusainji himself composed a cradle song (palna) in Sanskrit and taught it to Soordas. At that time, Shri Navneetpriyaji was seated in the cradle, and Soordas sang that cradle song composed by Shri Gusainji. The verse:

✿✿✿

राग रामकली -

प्रेङ्ग पयङ शयनं। चर वरह- तापहरम तरु चरमीक्षणं प्रकटय प्रेमायनं ॥।ध्रु.॥ तनुतर द् वजपंिक्तम तल लता न

ह सता न तव वीक्ष्य गायकीनाम ्। यदव ध परमेतदाशयासमभवञ्जी वतं तावकीनाम ् ॥ १॥

तोकता वपु ष तव राजते दृ श तु मदमा ननीमानहरणम ्। अ ग्रमे वय स कमुभा व कामेऽ प नजगो पका

भावकरणम ्॥।२॥

ब्रजयुव त ह्यद्यकनकाचलानारोदुमुत्सुककं तव चरण-युगलम् । तत्तुमुहुन्नमनकाभ्यास मव नाथ ! सप द कुरुते

मृदुल मृदुलम्॥३॥

अ धगोरोचना तलकमलकोग थत व वधम णमुक्ताफल वर चतम्। भूषणं राजते मुग्धताऽमृतभरस्यं द

वदनेन्दुर सतम् ॥४॥

भूतटे मातृर च- ताऽजन बंदुर तश यतशोभया दृग्दोषऽमपनयन ्। स्मर धनु ष मधु पवन लराज इव राजते

प्रण यसुखमुपनयन् ॥५॥

वचनरचनोदारहाससहज- िस्मतामृतचौरा त भारमपनयनं । पालय सदाऽरमानस्मदीय श्री वठ्ठले

नजदास्यमुपनयन् ॥६॥

Raag Ramkali –

Spreading the couch of love, You lie down upon it. Your beautiful eyes remove the heat of

long separation and reveal the very abode of divine love. (Refrain)

From the moment the melodious women saw Your exceedingly delicate row of teeth and

most graceful smile, their life has remained completely dependent upon You. (1)

Your form shines, and within Your glance lies the power to humble the pride of all proud

women. Even in Your youth, You manifest the pure loving mood of the Gopikas in

Yourself. (2)

The pair of Your feet, O Lord, eagerly wishes to climb the golden mountains of the hearts

of the young women of Braj. Thus, at every moment, they softly and gently move, as if

practicing the act of bowing down. (3)

The ornaments on Your body — decorated with fine tilak made of bright yellow

pigment, adorned with various jewels, pearls, and gems — shine resplendently. Your

moon-like face radiates childlike sweetness, overflowing with the nectar of innocence.

(4)

On Your forehead, the dot of black pigment made by Your mother glows with unmatched

beauty, removing all defects of the eyes of the onlooker. You shine like the lord of bees,

the god of love, seated upon his bow of sugarcane, bringing joy to Your beloveds. (5)

Your speech, noble in expression, Your natural laughter, and Your sweet smile remove the heavy sorrow of those who are devoted to You. O Shri Vitthala! Ever protect me and grant

me the fortune of Your eternal sevakhood. (6)

✿✿✿

So Soordas sang this verse before Shri Navneetpriyaji. Afterward, following the theme of this verse, Soordasji composed and sang many more verses. The verse:

✿✿✿

राग रामकली - प्रेङ्ग पयङ ग रधरन सोहे। प्रेम आनन्दभरी गो पका कर ध र दे त झोटा तहां काम को है ॥१॥

मदनमोहन हसत दन्त किान्त ह लसत बजत नपुर मधुर रुणनकारी। भाल म स बन्दु केसर तलक तहाँ लसे नैन

अजन मन स बान मारी ॥२॥

अलक राजत मुख ही भुज पसारत सुख ही हरत गोपाङ्गना मान त ह समैं तहाँ। देत सुख संधु सब गो पका मननकुं

'सूर' शोभा नर ख वारत तन मन जहां ॥३॥

Raag Ramkali –

On the swing (cradle) of love, Giridhar (Shri Krishna) shines beautifully. Filled with love

and joy, the Gopikas hold the swing's ropes and push Him gently. In that place, what

power can desire (Kamdev) possibly have? (1)

Madan-Mohan (the Enchanter of Love) smiles — the brilliance of His teeth gleams; the

sound of His anklets rings sweetly, creating a gentle melody. On His forehead shines a

dot of black pigment and a kesar (saffron) tilak. His eyes, like arrows of collyrium (kajal),

strike directly at the hearts of the onlookers. (2)

His curls shimmer upon His face; spreading His arms, He gives joy and removes the

pride of the Gopis. At that very moment, He grants the ocean of bliss to the hearts of all

the Gopikas. Seeing that radiant beauty of Giridhar, Surdas offers his entire body and

mind. (3)

✿✿✿

So Soordasji sang this cradle kirtan. After that, he sang many verses describing the divine childhood pastimes (bal-leela). The verse:

✿✿✿

राग बलावल-

दे ख सखी एक अद्भुत रूप। एक अंबुज म ध दे खयत बीस द धसुत जूप ॥१॥

एक अवली दोय जलचर उभय अक अनूप। पञ्च वा रज ढंग ह दे खयत कहो कहा स्वरूप ॥२॥

ससुग त मे भई सोभा करो कोऊ बचार। 'सूर' श्रीगोपाल की छ व रा खए उर धार ॥३॥

Raag Bilawal –

Seeing, O friend, an amazing sight! In the middle of one lotus, twenty sons of the

milkmaid (the cowherd women's children) were seen seated together. (1)

In one row were two water creatures, and on both sides, the sun's reflection shone

wondrously. Five lotuses stood nearby — tell me, what form could this be? (2)

The child's actions create such beauty — who can truly understand or describe them?

Sur says — keep the image of Shri Gopal's divine form firmly in your heart. (3)

सोभा आजु भली ब न आई। जलसुत उपर हंस बराजत ता पर ईद्र-बधू दरसाई ॥१॥

द धसूत लयो दयो द ध सुतको यह छ ब दे ख नन्द मु सक्याई। नीरज सुत वाहन कौ भच्छन 'सूरस्याम' ले कीर

चुगाई ॥२॥

Today, an extraordinary beauty has appeared! Upon the water's son (the moonlight

reflected on water) sits a swan, and upon that, the daughter of Indra (Sachi) is seen. (1)

The son of the milkmaid (Krishna) took and gave the son of the milkmaid (butter), seeing this charming sight, Nanda smiled. The son of the lotus (the sun) became the food

of the vehicle of the lotus's son (the swan), for Shyam (Krishna of Sur) fed grains to the

bird. (2)

✿✿✿

So Soordasji sang such verses before Shri Navneetpriyaji. Then Shri Gusainji, Shri Giridharji, and the other children said, "The way we decorate Shri Navneetpriyaji, in exactly that same way Soordasji sings his kirtans. Therefore, Shri Navneetpriyaji has immense grace upon Soordasji."

Prasang 6 – The Test of Soordasji's Divine Insight

After that, Shri Gusainji himself went to the temple of Shrinathji. So Soordasji also thought about going to Shrinathji's temple. Then Shri Giridharji and the other children said to him, "Soordasji, please stay here for two more days and sing kirtans for Shri Navneetpriyaji, and then you may go." So Soordasji stayed in Shri Gokul.

Then Shri Giridharji, together with Shri Govindrayji, Shri Balakrishnaji, and Shri Gokulnathji — these three brothers said, "This Soordasji describes in his songs the exact kind of dress and ornaments that are used to adorn Shri Navneetpriyaji. So one day, let us perform an extraordinary and unique decoration and not inform Soordasji about it. Then we shall see what kind of kirtan he sings!"

Then Shri Giridharji said, "Soordasji is a Bhagavadiya (devoted to God). He experiences the bliss of the Divine Form (Swaroopanand) in his heart. Therefore, however you dress and adorn Shri Navneetpriyaji, Soordasji will describe that very same decoration in his verses. Thus, it is not right to test a devotee of God."

Then the three children said to Shri Giridharji, “It is our heartfelt desire to do this, and there is no harm in it.” So Shri Giridharji said, “Those who adorn Shri Navneetpriyaji today shall do a truly wondrous decoration.”

After that, Shri Giridharji, along with the three boys, went to the temple of Shri Navneetpriyaji and began the seva (service) by bathing the Deity. Then they awakened Shri Navneetpriyaji and offered bhog (food offering). After that, they bathed and began the adornment. It was the month of Ashadh, and the weather was very hot. Therefore, they did not put any clothing on Shri Navneetpriyaji. They adorned Him only with pearls — two strings of pearls on His forehead, pearl armlets, pearl waist belt, pearl anklets, and all ornaments made of pearls. His tilak, nose-ornament, and earrings were there, but no clothing at all.

At that time, Soordasji was sitting in the Jagmohan (the outer hall of the temple). A realization arose within his heart. He thought to himself, “Today, Shri Navneetpriyaji has been adorned in a most wondrous way. Such a decoration I have never seen or even heard of before — only pearls are adorning Him, and there are no garments at all. Therefore, today I must sing a kirtan that matches this divine splendor.”

When the decoration was complete and the darshan opened, Shri Giridharji called Soordasji and said, “Soordasji! Have darshan and sing the kirtan.” Then Soordasji, in Raag Bilawal, sang this kirtan before Shri Navneetpriyaji. The verse:

✿✿✿

राग बलावल -

देखे री ह र नंगमनंगा। जलसुत भूषन अंग बराजत बसन हीन छ ब उ ठ तरंगा ॥१॥।

अंग अंग प्र त अ मत माधुरी नर ख लिज्जत र त को ट अनंगा। कलकत द धसुत मुख लेपन क र 'सूर' हसत ब्रज

युव तन संगा ॥२॥

Raag Bilawal –

Behold, O friend, Hari (Krishna) is unclothed and radiant! The ornaments of water

(pearls) shine upon His limbs, and though without garments, waves of

beauty arise from

His form. (1)

On every limb, endless sweetness is seen; witnessing this, countless Cupids and gods of

love feel ashamed. Laughing playfully, the son of the milkmaid (Krishna) applies butter

to His face — says Sur, amidst the joyous young women of Braj. (2)

✿✿✿

Hearing this, Shri Giridharji and all the other children became very pleased in their hearts. They then asked Soordas, “Soordasji! How did you sing this? Where did you get this idea?” Soordasji humbly replied, “Maharaj! Just as you performed such a wonderful and extraordinary adornment, in the same way I sang an equally wondrous kirtan.”

All the children, hearing this, became extremely happy with Soordasji. Thus, this Soordasji was a supremely blessed Bhagavadiya (devotee of God) who was the most favored recipient of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu’s grace. Shri Thakurji constantly revealed His divine presence within Soordasji’s heart.

After that, Shri Giridharji took Soordasji along with him to the temple of Shrinathji. There, Shri Giridharji narrated the entire incident to Shri Gusainji — how the children had desired to adorn Shri Navneetpriyaji in a most extraordinary manner, and how Soordasji had sung a kirtan perfectly matching that adornment. Shri Giridharji said, “He has divine experience in his heart.”

Then Shri Gusainji said to Shri Giridharji, “What can be said about Soordasji! He is the very ship of the Pushtimarg. He experiences the divine pastimes of the Lord at all times, day and night. Such was Soordasji — a most graciously blessed Bhagavadiya of Shri Acharyaji.”

Prasang 7 – Shri Nathji Saves Surdas

There was a boy from Braj who lived with Surdasji. He used to do all the work for Surdasji. His name was Gopal. One day, Surdasji was sitting down to take Mahaprasad. He said to that Gopal, “Please fill water in my loti (small vessel).” Then Gopal, the Brajwasi boy, replied, “You are sitting to take Mahaprasad; I will fill the water right away.” Saying this, Gopal went to collect cow dung. There, he met

two or four Vaishnavas and began talking with them. In that conversation, he completely forgot to bring water for Surdasji.

Meanwhile, Surdasji was sitting with Mahaprasad. A morsel got stuck in his throat. He moved his left hand here and there to look for the loti of water but could not find it. The morsel stuck in his throat and he could not speak. Surdas became very anxious. At that moment, Shri Nathji Himself came to Surdasji and placed His own small water vessel (jhari) before him. Surdasji drank the water from that jhari.

Then, the Brajwasi Gopal suddenly remembered that he had forgotten to fill water for Surdasji. He quickly ran back. By that time, Surdas had already finished taking Mahaprasad. When Gopal came, he said to Surdas, “Surdasji! You have finished taking Mahaprasad — from where did you drink water? I had gone to collect cow dung, and while talking with those Vaishnavas, I forgot. Now I have hurried back.”

Then Surdas said to Brajwasi, “Why did you keep the name ‘Gopal’? Gopal is only one — Shri Nathji Himself. Today, he saved my life. A morsel was stuck in my throat, and without water it could not come out. I was anxious, and just then a water vessel came into my hand. I drank water from it. I thought it must have been you who brought it. But now you say you were not here — so it must have been the temple’s Gopal (Shri Nathji). Look at the jhari and see what kind it is.”

Then Gopal, the Brajwasi, went to the place where Surdasji had taken Mahaprasad. When he looked, he saw that it was a golden jhari. He picked it up and brought it to Surdasji, saying, “This jhari belongs to the temple!” Then Surdas said to Brajwasi, “You have done a very wrong thing — you made Thakurji take so much trouble. For my sake, Thakurji Himself had to bring the jhari here! Now keep this jhari safely, and when Shri Gusainji (Vallabhacharya’s son) wakes up from rest, hand it over to him.” Gopal took the jhari, went to Shri Gusainji, offered prostrations, and placed it before him.

Shri Gusainji asked, “How did this jhari come into your hands? This jhari belongs to Shri Govardhan-dhari (Shri Nathji)!” Then Gopal explained everything humbly, saying, “Maharaj! This fault has occurred through me,” and he narrated the entire incident.

After hearing it, Shri Gusainji immediately went to bathe, had the jhari brought, wrapped it in a fresh cloth, and quickly went to the temple. There, he offered water to Shri Govardhan-dharan (Shri Nathji) and said, “Today, You have greatly protected Surdas. Other than You, what Vaishnav could offer such protection?” Then Shri

Nathji said, “When the morsel got stuck in Surdas’s throat, he became anxious — and I, too, became anxious. So, I brought the jhari.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): What does this mean? When Surdas became anxious, I too became anxious. The one who belongs to Bhagavan is not different from Me — he is My very form.

Afterwards, when the temple doors were opened for the morning service (Utthapan), Surdasji came and had the darshan of Utthapan. After offering bhog to Shri Nathji, Shri Gusainji came to Surdas and said, “Today, Gopal has shown great mercy upon you.”

Surdasji replied, “Maharaj! All this is your grace. Otherwise, why would Shri Nathji know someone fallen like me? It is only through the command of Shri Acharyaji (Vallabhacharya) that He accepts me.” Then Shri Gusainji said, “You are truly a devotee of Bhagavan. Without being Bhagavadiya (belonging wholly to Bhagavan), how could such humility be possible?” Thus, Surdasji was a Bhagavadiya, the most blessed recipient of Shri Acharyaji’s grace.

Prasang 8 – The Greedy Merchant of Gopalpur

Below the temple of Shrinathji, there is a village called Gopalpur. In that village, there lived a merchant. He was so deeply attached to household affairs and greed that he never once went to have the darshan of Shrinathji, nor did he ever come under the refuge of Shri Gusainji. In Gopalpur, beneath the hill, the merchant had his shop. When he opened his shop, he would first call any Vaishnav who had gone up the hill to have the darshan of Shrinathji and was returning, and would ask him, “What kind of adornment does Shrinathji have today?” The Vaishnav would tell him, and in this way, the merchant would praise the beauty of Shrinathji’s darshan before all the Vaishnavs. He would say, “Look, how wonderful is today’s adornment of Shrinathji! How divine is His darshan!”

In this way, though he never himself went for darshan, he would speak beautifully about it before the Vaishnavs. To appear devout, he would wear a garland, put on a fine tilak and stamp (Vaishnav mark), and speak words of love for Shrinathji before them. The Vaishnavs, pleased by his behavior, would think him a true Vaishnav and buy goods from him directly. In this way, by pretending to be pious and winning their trust, the merchant deceived all the Vaishnavs and gathered much wealth — yet did not spend even a single coin.

He continued in this manner for sixty years. One day, the merchant

said to Surdasji, “Surdasji! Today you must see how beautiful the adornment of Shrinathji is! And you never buy goods from my shop, nor do you ever come to my market. You are such a wise and noble Vaishnav — what is my fault that you never purchase from me? This shop is yours! I am but your sevak, a servant of you Vaishnavs. Please have mercy on me.”

Hearing the merchant’s sweet words, Surdasji thought to himself, “Look how beautifully this merchant speaks, yet above all, he deceives out of greed. I must now make him give up this deceit. He has never had the darshan of Shrinathji; I must make him do so, and also make him into a true Vaishnav.” With this thought, Surdas said to the merchant, “You have not had darshan even once in your whole life — I know this. And you are not a Vaishnav, that is why I do not come to your shop. Tell me truly, have you ever, even once, had the darshan of Shrinathji in your life?”

Hearing these words, the merchant became deeply distressed within himself. He said to Surdas, “Surdasji, please don’t say this before anyone else. The reason I don’t go for darshan is that if I leave my shop, the Vaishnavs who come to buy goods might go to someone else’s shop. If they start buying elsewhere, how will I eat? And there is no one here who can tell me when the doors for darshan open, so that I can quickly run and have darshan.”

Then Surdasji said to him, “If I come and inform you when the doors open, will you go then?” The merchant replied, “Yes, if you come and tell me, I will go. I have a great desire for darshan.” Then Surdasji said, “I will come at the time of Utthapan (when the Lord awakens).” Saying this, Surdasji left. Later, when the time of Utthapan came and the conch was sounded, Surdas came and told the merchant, “The conch has been blown; it is the time for darshan. Come now!”

The merchant replied, “At this time the villagers come to buy goods. When the doors for Bhog (offering) are opened, then please inform me.” Then Surdasji went up the hill, had the darshan of Shrinathji, and sang kirtan. Later, when it was time for the Bhog darshan, Surdasji came down from the hill and said to the merchant, “It is the time for darshan now; come!”

The merchant said, “Surdasji, right now the cows are about to come back. If I go to the temple, the cows will eat up all my grain. Please tell me when it’s time for the Shayan Aarti (night aarti); by then the cows will have gone back to their homes.”

Then Surdasji again went and had darshan at the time of Bhog, and also at Sandhya (evening). When it was time for Shayan Aarti, Surdas came to the merchant and said, “Come now, it is time for Shayan Aarti darshan.”

The merchant said, “Surdasji, you have worked very hard today, but now it is time to light the lamps. If we light lamps at this time, Goddess Lakshmi comes, but if the lamps are lit late, she will go away. And what if someone steals grain from my shop while I’m gone? So, I will go for darshan tomorrow morning, and then open my shop. Please come and inform me at the time of Mangala (early morning) darshan. You have already taken many rounds for me today.”

Then Surdasji went to the temple, had the darshan of Shrinathji, and later sang kirtans at the time of Shayan Aarti. When morning came, Surdasji bathed and went to the merchant saying, “It is time for Mangala darshan. Come now.”

The merchant replied, “Surdasji, I have just swept the shop and am arranging things. If I go now, customers might leave and I’ll lose the whole day’s business. Let me first open the shop, and then I will go for darshan at the time of Srinagar (adornment). Please come and tell me then.”

So Surdasji went and had Mangala Aarti darshan. Later, he returned at the time of Sringar. The merchant then said, “I haven’t yet made even the first sale of the day, and the cows are wandering around. But I will definitely go for Rajbhog darshan. You have gone through much trouble for me these days; you are truly devoted to Bhagwan.”

So Surdasji again went up the hill and had the darshan of Shrinathji during Sringar, singing kirtans. When it was time for Rajbhog Aarti, Surdas came to the merchant and said, “Now will you come?”

The merchant said, “How can I go now? The Vaishnavs who went for Rajbhog darshan will soon be coming down, and they all buy goods at this time. I am old — how will I climb up the hill and return quickly? And this is the main time for sales. Whatever I get, I get now. I’ll go for darshan at the time of Utthapan.”

In this way, Surdasji stayed with the merchant for three full days, but the merchant was so greedy that he did not go for darshan even once. On the fourth day, Surdasji bathed in the morning and went for Mangala darshan. Then he thought to himself, “Look, it has been three days, yet this merchant has not gone for darshan. Today, if he still

does not go, I must frighten him a little and make him go for darshan."

Thinking this, Surdas came to the merchant and said, "I have been coming here for three days, but you have still not gone for darshan. Today, you must come." The merchant replied, "I will make my first sale and then go for Srinagar darshan."

Then Surdas said, "Now I will tell all the Vaishnavs the truth about you — that this merchant is a liar, that he has never gone for Shrinathji's darshan, and that he is not a Vaishnav at all. From now on, if anyone comes to buy from you, I will sing before them your deceit in dohas, chaupais, and pads, exposing your hypocrisy." Saying this, Surdasji sang a pad in Raag Bhairav:

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राग भैरव -

आज काम किाल्ह काम परसों काम करना । पहेले दन बोहोत काम वमुख भए चरना ॥१॥

जागत काम सोवत काम काम ही में प च मरना। छां ड काम सुम र स्याम 'सूर' पक र सरना ॥ २॥।

Raag Bhairav –

Today work, tomorrow work, the day after tomorrow also work to be done. On the first

day, too much work — thus one became turned away from the Lord's feet. (1)

Awake — work, asleep — work, dying while being consumed only in work. Abandon

work, remember Shyam, O Sur, and take refuge in His shelter. (2)

✿✿✿

Surdasji sang that pad to the merchant right then and there. Hearing it, the merchant became frightened within himself. Then he fell at the feet of Surdasji and pleaded, "Please do not sing any doha or poem about me, and do not tell anyone about what I have done. I will go with you right now."

After that, the merchant went along with Surdasji. When the doors for Mangala darshan opened, Surdasji said to Shrinathji, "Maharaj! This

merchant is a divine soul. Please, attract his mind and grant him deliverance. Why? Because he lives under Your very flag." Shrinathji replied, "Just because he lives near Me, does that mean he knows Me? Only through the grace of My devotees does one attain Me."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why is this so? There are countless beings living in the Ganga and Yamuna — have they all attained liberation? Many beings such as flies, mosquitoes, and ants are also creations of the Lord — have they all become fulfilled? Only by being in the company of the devotees of the Lord does one become fulfilled. Only then can one attain the Lord. Through association with the devotees arises the feeling of sevak-bhav (servant-like devotion), and only then does divine grace descend.

After that, Shrinathji granted such a divine darshan to the merchant that his heart was completely captured by the Lord. When the Mangala darshan was over, the merchant fell at the feet of Surdasji and said humbly, "Maharaj! My entire life has been wasted in gathering wealth. I have much wealth — now please use it wherever you wish. And please make me a sevak of Shri Gusainji and turn me into a true Vaishnav."

Then Surdasji said to the merchant, "Go bathe, and touch no one. Come and sit here." By that time, Shri Gusainji had completed the adornment ceremony. Then Surdasji made a humble request to Shri Gusainji, saying, "Maharaj! Please take this merchant under Your refuge." Shri Gusainji, with a smile on His divine face, said to Surdasji, "Surdasji! You have done a great deed in bringing this old tree to bloom after sixty years. Without you, this merchant would have lost this entire life in vain."

After that, Shri Gusainji called the merchant, seated him before the image of Shrinathji, and performed the Brahma-Sambandh initiation for him. The merchant's mind became pure. From that day onward, he began to have darshan daily with discipline and devotion. The merchant made generous offerings to Shri Gusainji. He provided clothes, ornaments, and supplies for Shrinathji and sponsored many decorations.

Then one day the merchant said to Surdasji, "Surdasji! By your grace I have received the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji and have become a Vaishnav. Now please bless me further — that in this very life, my acceptance may be granted by the Lord Himself, and that I may never again be troubled by the joys and sorrows of this world." Then Surdasji composed and sang a pad to teach the merchant.

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राग बलावल-

कृष्ण सु मर तन पावन कीजे। जोलों जग सुपना सो जीजे ॥।१॥

अव ध उसास गने सब तेरे । सो बीतत भय आवत नेरे ॥ २॥

जो यह सपनो ना ह बचारे। कबहू न जनम वषय ल ग हारे ॥३॥

गहे ववेक बीज ले बोवे । कबहून जठर अिग्न में सोवे ॥४॥

बार बार तोकों समुझावे। जो छन जाय सो बोहो र नहीं आवे ॥५॥

ठ गनी वषय ठगोरी लाई। घ टका घटत छन ही छन जाई ॥६॥

गनत ही गनत अव ध नयरानी। छां ड चल्यो न ध भई बरानी ॥७॥

होत कहा अब के पछताने। तरुवर-पत्र न मले पुराने ॥८॥

पवन उडे सो बहु र न आवे। कता और अनेक बनाये ॥९॥

जल थल पस पंछी सुकर क्र म। मानुष तन पायो सब जुग अ म ॥१०॥

सो तन खोवे र त वत्त म न । काच गह्यो बसरी चन्ताम न ॥११॥

कबहू नीके नाथ न गायो । एक मन दसहू दस धायो ॥१२॥

मन ह मन माया अवगाहत। नायक भयो त ह पुर चाहत ॥ १३॥

स्वग रसातल भव रजधानी। तोऊ तृपत भयो न अ भमानी ॥ १४॥

ऐसे ही करत अव ध सब बीती ।गह्यो न झान रह्यो यह री त ॥१५॥

कबहू सनन म ल करत बडाई । कबहूक ललना ल लत लजाई॥१६॥

कबहूक हय हाथी रथ आसन। कबहूक पलका सुखद सुवासन ॥।१७॥

कबहूक चवर छत्र सर ढारे। कबहू सुभट पसुन च ढ मारे ॥।१८॥

कबहूतोरन छत्र बनावे। कबहूमद गज जूथ लरावे ॥१९॥

जोबत द्वार दूती सब ठाढी। त्यो त्यो तृष्णा सतगुनी बाढी ॥।२०॥

दव्य बसन फलफूल सुबासी । नव जोबन अबला सुखरासी॥।२१॥

द्वार कपाट सहस एक लागे। सुभट पहरुवा चहुँ दस जागे ॥२२॥

रमनी रमत न रजनी जानी। माया मद पयो अ भमानी ॥। २३॥

सुत वत व नता हेत लगायो। तब चेत्यो जब काल चेतायो ॥२४॥

झूठो नाटक सङ्ग न साथी । नोबत द्वार हय गज हाथी ॥२५॥

भूप छनक न भयो भखारी। क्यों हदै सूल न सहे बकारी।।२६॥

भयो अनाथ सनाथ न बांध्यो । तयक सूर-सरसन्मुख साध्यो ॥।२७॥

मनुष्य देह ध र कम कमायो। ते तरछे दुःख द्वारे पायो ॥ २८॥

ि◌ज हं तन काज जीव बध कीने। रसना-रस अ म षट-रस लीने ॥२९॥

सो तन छुटत प्रेत क र डारचो । प्रेत प्रेत क ह नगर नकारयो ॥ ३० ॥

हंसा क र पालन करी जाकी । वष्टा करम भस्म भई ताकी ॥॥ ३१॥

भोग अष्ट अरू बीस भयानक । ह रपद बमुख वषयरस पावक ॥३२॥

जा ग जा ग रे यहाँ को तेरो। माया सुपन कहत सब मेरो ॥३३॥

कृष्ण बना तो ह कौन छुडावे। सो करुणामय बरद बुलावे ॥ ३४॥

आन देव कौ नहीं भरोसो । बात खटरस लाख परोसो ॥।३५॥

जीवन गयो तृ षत की नांई। मृग तृष्णा कबहू न अघाई ॥।३६॥

ऐसे आन देव सुखदायक । ह र बनु कौन छुडावन लायक।। ३७॥

धमराज क ह सु न कृतहारी। तू वषयन- र त सूर त बसारी ॥।३८॥

गभ अ गन रक्षा ि◌ज हं कीनी। सङ्कट मे ट अभयता दीनी ॥। ३९॥

हस्त चरन लोचन नासा मुख। रु धर बूंदते लह्यो ऐसो सुख ॥।४०॥

सो सुख तू सपने नहीं जान्यो प्राननाथ क ह नकट न आन्यो ॥४१॥

कत ये सूल सहे अपराधी। नगम सख एको नहीं साधी॥४२॥

को टन बार मनुष्य तन पायो । ह र-पथ छांड अपथ को धायो ॥४३॥

समय गए असमय प छतैये। मानुष जन्म बहु र नहीं पैये ॥४४॥

सूझत स्वामी पीठ दे आगे। पु न पुरुषारथ काहे लागे ॥४५॥

पारस पाइ जल ध में बोरे। पु न गुन सुनत कपार ह फोरे ॥४६॥

चंताम ण कोडी ल ग दीनी । सु न पर मत करुणा अ त कीनी ॥४७॥

पाइ कल्पतरु मूल खनावे । सो तरु पु न कैसे सो पावे॥४८॥

मधु भाजन पूरन व ध दीनो । सो तू छां ड हलाहल कीनो ॥४९॥

कामधेनु तिज अज ह बसाहे। गज-बल छां ड स्याल-बल चाहे ॥५०॥

यह नर देह स्याम बनु खोई क प को तक लों बां ध बगोई ॥५१॥

काहे न करम कयो तू ऐसो। सुक सन सनक सनंदन जैसो॥५२॥

सुर नर मु न असुर पु न देवक । ह रपद भिज सब तेरे सेवक॥५३॥

परदक्षणा दे सीस नवावे । मन सज तोइ न परसन पावे ॥।५४॥

जाकों भजत ऐसो सुख पैये। सु न सठ सो कैसे बसरैये ॥५५॥

अग नत प तत नाम – नस्तारी। जनम करम संताप नवारी ॥५६॥

नरभय होइ भिक्त न ध पाई। कबहू काल ब्याल नहीं खाई ॥५७॥

सवसु जीवन कृष्ण नाम पद । भवजल व्या ध उपा ध परम गद ॥।५८॥

श्रीभागवत परम हतकारी। द्वारे रटत ह र ´सूर' भखारी॥५९॥

परम प तत सरनाई लीजे । पदरज दान अभयता दीजे ॥६०॥

Raag Bilawal –

Remember Krishna and make your body pure. Live in the world as if it were a dream. (1)

Every breath and sigh you take belongs to Him. As each passes, death draws nearer. (2)

Those who do not reflect upon this dream of life, forever lose themselves in worldly

desires. (3)

Hold fast to wisdom, sow its seed; never let it be consumed in the fire of the stomach. (4)

Again and again I warn you: that moment which passes never returns. (5)

The deceiving senses have tricked you; moment by moment, life slips

away. (6)

While counting time, your allotted span draws near; leaving all, your wealth becomes

alien to you. (7)

Why repent now, when it is too late? The old leaves of a tree never return. (8)

The wind that blows away never comes back. The Creator has made countless others like

you. (9)

Among water, land, beasts, and birds — in every birth — you obtained a human body,

rare of all. (10)

Yet wasting that body for wealth and lust, you grasped glass and forgot the

wish-fulfilling gem. (11)

Never once did you sing of the good Lord; your mind ran in ten directions. (12)

Your mind plunged deep into illusion, craving the glitter of this world. (13)

Whether heaven, underworld, or the royal palaces of earth — even there the proud are

never satisfied. (14)

In this way your entire life passed, and you never gained understanding. (15)

Sometimes boasting in gatherings of the wise, sometimes lost in beauty and shame. (16)

Sometimes riding horses, elephants, and chariots; sometimes resting on soft cushions in

luxury. (17)

Sometimes shaded by canopies and umbrellas; sometimes commanding soldiers in

battle. (18)

Sometimes building arches and flags of triumph; sometimes leading maddened herds of

elephants to war. (19)

Servants stood at your doorway, yet your craving only multiplied sevenfold. (20)

Clothed in divine garments, fruits, and perfumes; surrounded by youthful women and

pleasures. (21)

Your doors were barred by a thousand gates; guards stood awake on every side. (22)

Lost in sensual delight, you knew not when the night passed — drunk on illusion and

pride. (23)

Attached to sons, wealth, and wife — you awakened only when Death himself awakened

you. (24)

All your plays and companions were false; the drums, the doors, the elephants, the

horses — all vanished. (25)

The mighty king became a beggar in an instant; why then should the poor not endure

pain? (26)

You became helpless, without refuge, unable even to tie your own cloth; your body

turned away from the Lord. (27)

Having received a human body and performing deeds, you entered the

crooked door of

suffering. (28)

With that body, you nourished only sin — feeding the tongue on six tastes of pleasure.

(29)

That body, once dead, is cast out and called a ghost; “ghost, ghost!” people cry as they

drive it away from the city. (30)

The one you nourished with violence — its excrement turns to ashes. (31)

Those who reject the feet of Hari burn in the fire of worldly pleasures — eight and

twenty fierce torments await them. (32)

Awake, awake! What is truly yours here? You call “mine” to this illusion and dream. (33)

Without Krishna, who will save you? He alone is known for His boundless compassion.

(34)

Do not rely on other gods; their stories are mere talk, flavored with falsehood. (35)

Life has passed like that of a thirsty man — never quenched, chasing mirages. (36)

What other gods can give joy like Hari? Who but He can grant true deliverance? (37)

Dharma Raj will say, “You abandoned true devotion, lost in lust and pleasure.” (38)

He who protected you in the fire of the womb, who removed your fears and gave safety—

(39)

He who gave you hands, feet, eyes, nose, and mouth — such joy you gained from each

drop of blood. (40)

Yet you never even dreamt of that joy, never called your Beloved near. (41)

Now you suffer the pains of punishment; not one teaching of the scriptures did you

follow. (42)

A million times you received a human body, yet you abandoned the path of Hari for the

wrong road. (43)

When time is gone, you will repent in vain — the human birth will not be found again.

(44)

You turned your back on your Lord — what use now of striving? (45)

You found the philosopher's stone and threw it into the ocean, then broke your head

hearing of its glory. (46)

You gave away the wish-fulfilling gem for a mere shell, yet the Lord showed you infinite

mercy. (47)

You dug up the roots of the wish-giving tree you once found — how will you find it

again? (48)

You abandoned the nectar-filled cup and drank poison instead. (49)

You left the divine cow Kamadhenu and worshiped an ordinary one; you forsook the

elephant's strength and desired the jackal's. (50)

Having lost this human body without Krishna, you bound your soul in endless births.

(51)

Why did you not act like the sages Suk, Sanak, and Sanandan? (52)

Even gods, men, sages, demons, and celestials — all worship Hari's feet as your servants.

(53)

They circle Him and bow their heads; even Cupid cannot touch them. (54)

He whose devotion brings such joy — how can a fool ever forget Him? (55)

Countless fallen souls have been delivered by His Name, freed from the pain of birth and

deeds. (56)

By devotion one becomes fearless and attains the treasure of Bhakti; even the serpent of

death cannot bite him. (57)

All life, all wealth, rests in Krishna's Name — it is the supreme cure for the disease of

worldly existence. (58)

The Shrimad Bhagavatam is the highest giver of good; at its door cries Surdas, the

beggar of Hari. (59)

O Supreme Lord! Take refuge in You I come — grant the gift of Your dust and freedom

from fear. (60)

✿✿✿

Then that merchant developed firm and unwavering devotion. All worldly desires were removed from his heart. His devotion rose above

even knowledge and renunciation. He became deeply attached to the lotus feet of Shrinathji and experienced the bliss of His true divine form. Immersed in divine joy, he was absorbed in spiritual ecstasy. Thus, through the association of Surdasji, even such a greedy merchant became fulfilled and liberated. Such was the divine nature of Surdasji — truly devoted to Bhagwan.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why was this so? Because in his essence, the merchant was a divine soul. In the divine pastimes, he is one of Shri Lalitaji's companions, and his name in that Leela is "Viraja." By coming into the company of Surdasji, he experienced the divine Leela once again. Therefore, the company of the devotees of the Lord is the highest of all.

Prasang 9 – Surdasji's Reverence for Visiting Vaishnavas

Once, from Shri Gokul, Paramanand and about ten to fifteen other Vaishnavas came to meet Surdasji and to have the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. After they had attended the darshan of the Lord during the Aarti, they came to visit Surdasji. At that time, Surdasji offered great respect and honor to all the Vaishnavas and then sang kirtans.

✿✿✿

राग कान्हरो -

ह रजन संग छनक जो होई । को ट स्वगसुख को ट मुिक्तसुख ता सम लहे न कोई ॥ १॥

पूरे भाग्य पुन्य सिञ्चत फल कृष्ण कृपा व्ह जाके। 'सूरदास' ह रजन पदम हमा कहेत भागवत ताके ॥।२॥

Rāga Kānharo –

Even a moment's company with the servants of Hari — No one attains happiness equal

to that of crores of heavens or crores of liberations. □1□

Through complete fortune, the fruit of accumulated merits, and Krishna's grace upon

whom — 'Soordas' says, the Bhagavat itself describes the greatness of the feet of the

servants of Hari. □2□

राग कान्हरो -

प्रभु जन पर प्रसन्न जब होई । तब वैष्णवजन दशन पावे पाप रहे नहीं कोई ॥१॥

ह र – लीला आवेस होइ मन सकल बासना नासे। 'सूर यह नश्चै बचार क र ह रस्वरूप जब भासे ॥२॥

Rāga Kānharo –

When the Lord becomes pleased with His devotees —

Then a Vaishnava attains their sight, and no sin remains. □1□

When the mind is filled with the ecstasy of Hari's play, all desires are destroyed.

'Soor,' considering this with certainty, says — when the divine form of Hari is perceived.

□2□

राग कान्हट –

ह र के जनकी अ त ठकुराई। महाराज ऋ षराज देवमु न देखत रहे लजाई ॥। १॥

दृढ़ वश्वास कयो संहासन ता पर बैठे भूप। ह र-जस बमल छत्र सर सो भत राजत परम अनूप ॥ २॥

दृढ़ वश्वास राज ता हको ताकौ लोग बडो उच्छाह। काम क्रोध मद मोह लोभ म ल भये चोर ते साह॥३॥

ह र पद पडज पयो प्रेमरस ता ह के रंग राते। मंत्री ज्ञान औसर नही पावत कहत बात सङ्काते ॥ ४॥

अथ काम दोऊ रहे दु र दु र धम मोक्ष सर नावे। वनय ववेक व चत्र पौ रया समय न कबहू पाये ॥ ५॥

अष्ट महा सद् ध द्वारे ठाढ़ी कर जोरे उरलीने। छ डदार वैराग्य वनोदी झरकी बा हर कीने ॥६॥

माया काल कछू नहीं व्यापे जो रस- री त यह जाने । 'सूरदास' नर तन पाए गुरु प्रसाद प हचाने ॥ ७॥

Rāga Kānhat –

The greatness of the servants of Hari is very high — Great kings,

sages, and divine seers

stand humbled seeing them. □1□

Having firm faith, they sit upon the throne as sovereigns — The pure fame of Hari

shines as a spotless royal umbrella above their head, radiant beyond compare. □2□

The firm faith of that kingship fills people with great enthusiasm — Lust, anger, pride,

delusion, and greed all become thieves turned noble. □3□

They drink the nectar of love at the feet of Hari, immersed in its color — Ministers of

knowledge find no occasion to speak, hesitant to utter a word. □4□

Wealth and desire remain far away; even Dharma and Moksha bow their heads —

Humility and wisdom are wondrous courtiers who never find leisure. □5□

The eight great siddhis stand at the door with folded hands pressed to their hearts —

The gatekeepers of renunciation and joyous detachment have peeped outside. □6□

Maya and Time cannot affect the one who knows this path of divine taste —

‘Soordas’ says: Having attained a human body, one recognizes it by the Guru’s grace. □7□

राग हमीर –

जा दन संत पाहुने आवत। तीरथ को ट स्नान करन फल दरसन ही तें पावत ॥१॥ प्रफुिल्लत वदन रहत नस दन प्र त चरनकमल चत्त लावत । मनक्रमबचन और न ह जानत सु मरत और सु मरावत

॥|२॥

मथ्यावाद उपा ध र हत व्ह बमल बमल जस गावत । ´सूरदास' प्री त क र उनसों जो ह र सूरत करावत ॥३॥

Rāga Hamīr –

The day when saints come as guests — The fruit of bathing in crores of holy places is

obtained just by their darshan (sight). □1□

With cheerful face, they always remain, their hearts fixed upon the lotus feet —

They know nothing else in mind, action, or speech, remembering and making others

remember Hari. □2□

Free of falsehood and pretension, singing pure, pure praise — 'Soordas,' out of love, says:

those who make others see the form of Hari. □3□

✿✿✿

In this way, Surdasji sang many verses for the Vaishnavas. Then all the Vaishnavas became very pleased. After that, Surdasji said to those Vaishnavas, "Please show some kindness towards me and give me an instruction." Then all the Vaishnavas said to Surdasji, "Please explain the nature of knowledge, yoga, the Supreme Truth, and the form of love and affection towards Shri Thakurji." Then Surdasji sang this kirtan. That verse is as follows.

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राग बहागरो –

जोग सो कोऊ नहीं ह र पाए। नज आज्ञा तप कयो बधाता कबरसरास खलाए ॥।१॥

जोग जुग त सङ्कर आराधत परमतत्व चत्त लाए। भुज ध र ग्रीव कब ह नन्दनन्दन हल मल कल सुर गाए ॥२॥

बगदावल महा र ष कबहु तून छाया न कराए। बरखत बरखत दुखी जा न नन्दनन्दन कब ग रवर कर छाए॥३॥

अ त तपपुञ्ज वप्र दुवासा दुवा तृन नत खाए। चक सुदशन तपत महामु न कब मुख अनल समाए ॥४॥

बहुत तप कयो माकडे मु न आय सन्धु भरमाये। सत कल्प बीतत भये तब ह र वरुन फांस मुकराये ॥५॥

भक्त बरह कातर करुनामय वेद नरंतर गावे। को हे जोग सुनत यहाँ उधो 'सूर' स्याम मन भावे ॥ ६॥

Rāga Bihāgaro –

No one attains Hari by yoga. Even Brahmā performed penance by His own command,

and the lotus sprang forth from the navel. □1□

By yogic methods, Shankara worships, fixing his mind on the Supreme Truth.

But when the son of Nanda (Krishna) moves His arm or neck slightly, all the celestial

beings sing joyfully. □2□

When the great sage Bhagadvāla once did not make shade for You, Then, as You saw him

suffering in rain upon rain, Nandanandan held up the Govardhan mountain to provide

shade. □3□

The very austere Brahmin Durvāsā, a heap of penance, always ate only the grass called

durvā. But when the great sage was scorched by the discus Sudarshan, when did his

mouth enter into fire? □4□

The sage Markandeya performed great austerity and wandered over the ocean;

After the span of seven aeons had passed, then Hari released him from the noose of

Varuṇa. □5□

The Compassionate One, pained by the devotee’s separation, is ceaselessly sung by the

Vedas. O Uddhav, what is this talk of yoga here? says ‘Soor’ — only Shyām pleases the

heart. 6

✿✿✿

In this way, Surdasji sang many kirtans and explained them to the Vaishnavas. Then all the Vaishnavas became pleased and said, “Great divine grace of Bhagavan rests upon Surdasji.” After that, all the Vaishnavas took leave and went for the darshan of Shri Nathji. Then, after taking leave of Surdasji, they returned to Gokul. Thus, this Surdasji was a most highly favored and devoted sevak of Shri Acharyaji, deeply blessed by the grace of Bhagavan.

Prasang 10 – The Lord’s Wish to Call Surdasji

In this way, Surdasji served Bhagavan with great devotion for many days. Then he came to know that it was the Lord’s wish to call him.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why so? Because this is the divine manner of the Lord — when He desires to manifest Himself on earth from Vaikunth, He first causes His devotees, who dwell in Vaikunth, to appear on earth. After that, the Supreme Lord Himself manifests and performs divine pastimes along with His devotees. When He withdraws His devotees from this world, He takes them back to Vaikunth, where He continues His pastimes with them.

Just as Nanda, Yashoda, the Gopis, the Gopas, Vasudev, Devaki, and the Yadavas — all these devotees were manifested first. Later, the Lord Himself appeared and performed His divine pastimes on the holy land. Then, after completing the worldly pastimes, He caused the Yadavas to disappear through the destruction by the pestles and completed His manifest play. However, He did not show the worldly disappearance of Shri Nandaraya, Shri Yashoda, and the Gopis.

In the same way, Shri Vallabhacharyaji and Shri Gusainji are manifestations of the Supreme Complete Purushottam (the Supreme Person). Therefore, the Vaishnavs connected to His divine pastimes were first manifested. Now, Shri Vallabhacharyaji has performed His disappearance pastime, and Shri Gusainji’s time to do so will come. But before that, He will first establish His divine devotees in the eternal pastimes. Therefore, the Lord does not show the worldly disappearance of His own divine devotees.

Just as He said to His uncle Harivanshji, “You should go to Gujarat,” and by sending him to Gujarat, He performed His disappearance as a pastime. In the same way, Shri Govardhannathji wished to call

Surdasji into His eternal pastimes.

Then Surdasji thought in his mind, “I have made a resolve to compose one hundred and twenty-five thousand kirtans (devotional songs). Of these, one hundred thousand kirtans are already revealed. According to the Lord’s will, twenty-five thousand kirtans remain to be completed. After that, I shall leave this body and perform disappearance.”

Thus, Surdasji was reflecting in his mind. At that very moment, Shri Govardhannathji Himself manifested and appeared before him and said, “Surdasji! The desire you made in your mind to compose one hundred and twenty-five thousand kirtans has now been fulfilled. I Myself have completed the remaining twenty-five thousand kirtans. You may look at your collection of kirtans.”

Then Surdasji said to one Vaishnav, “Look at my book of kirtans.” So Vaishnav looked and found that between the kirtans of Surdasji, there was the signature “Sursyam.” Such kirtans were all divine pastimes — and there were indeed twenty-five thousand of them.

That Vaishnav said to Surdasji, “Till yesterday, there were no kirtans marked with ‘Sursyam,’ and today they are found throughout all the pastimes.” Then Surdasji offered full prostrations before Shrinathji and said, “Now my heart’s desire is fulfilled by Your grace. Please give me your command as to what I should do next.” Then Shri Govardhannathji said, “Now you come to My divine pastimes and experience the nectar of divine play.” Saying this, Shri Nathji disappeared.

Then Surdasji, offering full prostrations to Shri Govardhannathji, became very pleased in his mind. But the two Vaishnavs beside him were ordinary men; they did not know that Shri Thakurji Himself had come to Surdasji and had given him divine instruction. Why so? Because the form of Shri Thakurji can only be experienced by His divine devotees — not by anyone else.

Prasang 11 – Surdasji’s Departure to Parasoli

Then Surdasji, after thinking in his mind, went to Parasoli. There, Lord Krishna had performed the continuous Rasa Lila throughout one divine night, as described in the Ras Panchadhyayi of the Bhagavatam. It was there that the full moon, Udaraj Chandra, had manifested. That very place is known as Chandrasarovar — a wondrous and divine site.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): These eight companions (Ashta Sakhās) are associated with the eight gateways of Shri Giriraj Govardhan. Each one presides over service at one gateway. All eight of them left their mortal bodies at these gateways and, assuming divine bodies, remain eternally engaged in service within the Lord's pastimes.

(1) One gateway is above Govind Kund. Facing that, at Parasoli near Chandrasarovar, Surdasji is the chief sevak in service. (2) Above Apsara Kund is another gateway, where Chitswami is the chief sevak. (3) Above Surabhi Kund is a gateway, where Paramananddas serves as chief sevak. (4) Near the Kadamkhadi of Govindswami is a gateway, where Govindswami himself is the head sevak. (5) Near Rudra Kund is another gateway, where Chaturbhujdas serves as the chief sevak. (6) Facing Bilchhu is a path that leads to the Rasa Lila; there Krishna Das is the chief sevak of that service. (7) Near Mansi Ganga is a gateway, where Nanddas serves as chief sevak. (8) Facing Anyor village is another gateway; near it lies the village Jamunavat, where Kumbhandas serves as chief sevak.

Thus, within Shri Giriraj, there are eternal divine groves (Nikunjas) where the divine pastimes continuously take place. These eight Nikunjas have eight gateways, where the eight companions remain ever ready in loving service. Among them, Surdasji's abode is Parasoli.

Then Surdasji offered full prostrations before the flag of Shri Govardhannathji and, facing it, lay down to rest. Yet, in his heart, he thought: "Shri Vallabhacharyaji and Shri Gusainji have showered immense grace upon me. They have allowed me to experience the divine pastimes of Shri Govardhannathji through this very body. If, at this time, Shri Gusainji would graciously appear and bless me with His darshan, my fortune would be immense. Shri Gusainji, whose name itself means 'Ocean of Compassion,' always fulfills the wishes of His devotees — surely He will fulfill mine."

Thus thinking of Shri Gusainji's divine form, Surdasji was meditating deeply. At that very time, Shri Gusainji Himself was adorning Shri Govardhannathji. That day, when Shri Gusainji did not see Surdasji sitting and singing in the Jagmohan Hall, He asked His sevaks, "Where is Surdasji?" Then one Vaishnav humbly said, "Maharaj! Surdasji, after having Shri Mangala Aarti's darshan this morning, went to Parasoli. He remembered the Lord with all His sevaks and left." Then Shri Gusainji understood that the Lord's will had come to call Surdasji into His eternal pastimes. So He said, "Today Surdasji has gone to Parasoli."

Then Shri Gusainji instructed all Vaishnavs with His own holy mouth: “The ship of the Path of Grace (Pushtimarg) is about to set sail. Whoever wishes to take something from it should do so now. Go there and see Surdasji. I shall come myself after the Rajbhog Aarti.” So all the Vaishnavs went to Surdasji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here, the word ‘ship’ (jahaj) means this — just as a merchant fills his ship with many valuable goods for trade, so also Surdasji’s heart was filled with countless divine treasures of spiritual value.

At that time, Surdasji, fixing his mind on the forms of Shri Gusainji and Shri Govardhannathji, ceased speaking. Then Shri Gusainji sent fifteen Brajwasis (inhabitants of Braj) to inquire, saying, “Come back and tell me the news of Surdasji by two o’clock.” Those Brajwasis went and, returning, told Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! Now Surdasji is no longer speaking with anyone.” Thus, when the time for the Rajbhog Aarti arrived, Shri Gusainji completed the Rajbhog Aarti of Shri Govardhannathji and went Himself to Parasoli, where Surdasji was.

Along with Shri Gusainji came Ramdas, Kumbhandas, Govindswami, Chaturbhujdas, and other Vaishnavs. They all came before Surdasji and saw that he was unconscious, unaware of his body. Then Shri Gusainji took Surdasji’s hand and said, “Surdasji! How are you?” Immediately, Surdasji arose, offered full prostrations, and said, “Baba! You have come? I was waiting only for you. At this moment You have showered great mercy and given me Your darshan. Maharaj! I was meditating upon Your divine form only.” At that very time, Surdasji sang this kirtan in Raag Sarang.

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राग सारंग -

देखो देखो ह र जू कौ एक सुभाव। अ त गम्भीर उदार उद ध प्रभु झा न-सरोम न राय॥१॥

राई ितनी सेवा कौ फल मानत मेरु समान। समझ दास अपराध संधु सम बूंद न एकौ मान ॥॥२॥

बदन प्रसन्न कमल पद सन्मुख देखत हो ह र जैसे। बमुख भए कृपा या मुखकी जब देखो तब तैसे ॥३॥

भक्त वरह कातर करुनामय डोलत पाछे लागे। ' सूरदास'ऐसे प्रभुकों क्यों दीजे पीठ अभागे ॥४॥

Rāga Sārang –

Behold, behold the one nature of Shri Hari! Most deep, generous, and ocean-like in

greatness — the Lord, the crest-jewel of kings. 1

He considers the fruit of service as great as Mount Meru, Even if that service is as small as a mustard seed; And He regards a servant's sin as not even a single drop in the ocean.

2

When the Lord's face is cheerful and one beholds His lotus feet before oneself,

Then such is His grace — And when one turns away, then accordingly He too appears so.

3

The Compassionate One, restless in the pain of the devotee's separation, follows behind

them. 'Soordas' says — how could anyone so unfortunate turn their back on such a Lord?

4

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This verse was sung by Surdasji before Shri Gusainji. Then Shri Gusainji Himself, with His own holy mouth, said, "In this way, Shri Thakurji Himself bestows the gift of humility upon His divine devotees — know this to be His complete grace. Surdasji is indeed the vessel of that nectar of humility."

At that time, all the Vaishnavs were standing before Shri Gusainji. Among them, Chaturbhujdas said, "Surdasji is a supreme devotee of the Lord. He has composed hundreds of thousands of verses in praise of Shri Thakurji, yet he has not described the glory of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu."

Hearing this, Surdasji said, "I have described all glory as belonging to Shri Acharyaji alone. If I had seen anything separate, I would have spoken separately. But since you have asked me this, I will now tell you — know that all my kirtans are based on this very understanding." Then follows the verse:

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(राग बहाग | Raag Bihag)

भरोसो दुढ़ इन चरनन केरो। श्रीवल्लभ नख चन्द्र छटा बनु सब जगमांझ अँधेरो॥

Have firm faith in the lotus feet of Shrimad Vallabhacharya and take refuge in them, for

without the radiance of the moon-like nails of these divine feet, the entire world appears

to be in darkness.

साधन और नाहीं या क लमें जासों होत नवेरो।

In this Kaliyug, there is no other means by which a soul can cross over the ocean of

worldly existence.

'सूर' कहा कहे द् व वध आंधरो बना मोल को चेरो॥

Surdas says, “I have become blind in both ways i.e., worldly and spiritual, yet even so, I

am your servant without price.”

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Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this kirtan, Surdasji opened the feelings of his heart. The word “trust” here means the faith and firm confidence that a soul places in the refuge of the divine feet. For me, Surdas, my steadfast faith rests in the feet of Shri Acharyaji. The radiance of Shri Acharyaji’s toenails — those ten jewel-like nails of his divine lotus feet — without them, the entire three worlds appear as darkness. Therefore, know this trust to be firm and unwavering.

In this Kali Yuga, without the shelter of Shri Acharyaji’s feet, there is no other means to attain the fruit of true realization. How then could I describe anything as separate? If someone perceives a difference between Shri Govardhan-dhar (the Lord who lifted Govardhan) and Shri Acharyaji’s form, they are indeed blind. Just as one who sees a distinction between Shri Krishna and Swaminiji (Shri Radha) is ignorant, in the same way, Shri Govardhan-dhar and Shri Acharyaji are one. I am their sevak without price — what does “without price”

mean? It means one who serves purely out of love alone.

As stated in the Ras Panchadhyayi, in the Gopi Gita of the Braj devotees, they say, “Ashulka Dasika” — a maidservant without price — meaning one whose devotion is beyond any material value. Why? Because one who worships the Lord with a desire for gain or reward is called a servant for a price; such devotion is not supreme. Therefore, desireless devotion (nishkama bhakti) is the highest. Such a devotee is called an “amolik das,” a priceless sevak. In such devotion, the Lord becomes bound by love.

As the Lord Himself says in the Panchadhyayi, “Your devotion is such that I cannot repay it. I shall remain forever indebted to you.” These are the signs of the priceless sevak. This is the spirit in which this verse was sung. What is this verse like? The sentiment of this kirtan encompasses all of Surdasji’s one hundred and twenty-five thousand compositions — all reflect the same essence.

Then Chaturbhujdas became pleased. Afterward, all the Vaishnavs and Shri Gusainji Himself said, “The heart of Surdas overflows with supremely divine feeling. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji Himself called Surdasji ‘Sagar’ — the ocean. Just as the sea is unfathomable, so too is the heart of Surdasji immeasurable.”

Then Chaturbhujdas said, “Surdasji! Who else but you can reveal such divine emotions? Now, please explain — in brief — the true form of Shri Acharyaji’s Path of Grace (Pushtimarg). How may one experience the essence of its divine nectar?” At that time, Surdasji sang this verse before all the Vaishnavs. The verse is as follows:

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राग सारंग -

भिज सखी भाव-भा वक देव । को ट साधन करो कोऊ तोऊ न माने सेव ॥१॥

धुनकेतु कुमार मांग्यो कौन मारग री त। पुरुषतें त्रय भाव उपन्यो सबै उलटी रीत ॥।२॥

बसन भूषन पल ट पहेरे भाव सो संजोई। उलट मुद्रा दई अङ्कन बरन सूधे होई ॥३॥

वेद व धको नेम नाहीं जहां प्री तकी प हचा न । ब्रजबधूबस कये मोहन ´सूर' चतुर सुजान ॥४॥

Rāga Sārang –

O friend! Worship that Lord who is moved by pure feeling. Even if one performs crores of

spiritual practices, still He does not accept service without true devotion. 1

The son of Dhundhuketu asked — “Which path and method is this?” From the

masculine arose the feminine feeling — all the ways were reversed. 2

They changed their garments and ornaments, yet preserved the inner sentiment. They

reversed the attitude (mudrā), and by that mark, the color became pure. 3

There are no rules of the Vedas or prescribed observances where the recognition of love

exists. The Enchanter of Braj's maidens has acted thus — says 'Soor,' the clever and wise

one. □4□

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Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this verse, Surdasji revealed that one who worships the Lord with the feelings of the Gopis attains the truest form of devotion. Those who are devoted to Shri Govardhan-dhar should worship Him by adopting the emotional state of the Gopis — as the Gopis did, in the mood of a companion (sakhi-bhav). In the divine grove pastimes (kunja-lila), only the sakhis have the right to serve; therefore, here, the word "sakhi" is used.

Even if one performs millions of Vedic rituals, they are not considered true service. For example, the sixteen thousand daughters of Agnikumar — the sage known as "Dhumraketu" — their sons, sixteen thousand rishis, once became enchanted by the form of Lord Ramachandra in the Dandakaranya forest and said to Him, "O Lord, play with us."

Then Shri Ramachandra replied, "In Braj, you shall take birth as women, and then your heart's desire will be fulfilled." Hence, women have no right in the Vedic ritualistic path, but in the divine pastimes of the Supreme Purushottam, the feminine (receptive, loving) emotion holds the highest place. This path of devotion is opposite to that of the Vedas.

Just as in the Ras Panchadhyayi, the devotees of Braj wear their ornaments and garments in the reverse manner — the world may call them "mad," yet in divine love, they are the highest. Similarly, in recitation, reversed syllables purify the body with their true sound — in that way, what the ignorant of this world call reversed or strange is in truth supreme in divine play.

When one forgets worldly illusion (prapanch) and becomes absorbed in divine love, that is true prema (pure love). In the primary devotional sentiment, there are no rules of Vedic injunctions. Such love alone binds Shri Thakurji, as the Gopis bound the Lord with their affection.

Who is Shri Thakurji? He who enchants all beings — and yet, though He conquers everyone, no one can conquer Him. He is the crown jewel of all cleverness, yet He Himself becomes bound by love. Forgetting all else, He becomes controlled only by that love. This is the devotion of the Path of Grace (Pushtimarg) and its true form — such is what Surdasji declared.

Then Chaturbhujdas and all the Vaishnavs praised Surdasji, saying, “Blessed, blessed is he! Great is the Lord’s grace upon him.” After that, Surdasji remained silent. Then Shri Gusainji Himself asked Surdasji, “Surdasji! Now, at this moment, where is your mind engaged?” At that very moment, Surdasji sang another verse. The verse is as follows:

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

ब ल ब ल हकुँव र रा धका नन्दसुवन जासों र त मानी। वे अ तचतुर तुम चतुर - सरोमनी प्री त करी कैसे रहे छानी

॥१॥

वे जो धरत तन कनकपीत पट सो तो सब तेरी ग त ठानी । तें पु न स्याम सहज यह सोभा अंबर मस अपने उर आनी

॥ २॥

पुल कत अङ्ग अबही व्हे आयो नर ख सुभग नज देह सयानी। 'सूर' सुजान सखी के बूझे प्रेम प्रकास भयो वहँसानी

॥३॥

Rāga Sārang –

Blessed, blessed is the princess Rādhikā, with whom the son of Nanda has accepted love.

He is supremely clever, and You are the crest-jewel of cleverness — how has love

remained hidden between You two? 1

She who wears garments of golden-yellow hue — that is all Your own style assumed.

And again, Shyām's natural beauty has brought that same splendor of the sky into His

own heart. □2□

The body became thrilled with horripilation immediately upon beholding His own lovely

form reflected. 'Soor,' the wise one, says — the sakhī, understanding this revelation of

love, smiled gently. □3□

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After that, he sang another verse as follows:

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राग बहागरो -

खञ्जन नैन रूप रस माते। अ तसे चारू चपल अ नयारे पल पंजरा न समाते। च ल-च ल जात नकट श्रवननके

उलट फरत ताटक फंदाते। ' सूरदास' अजन गुन अटके नाँतर अब उ ड जाते ॥

Rāga Bihāgaro –

The wagtail-like eyes, intoxicated with the nectar of beauty — So exceedingly lovely,

restless, and radiant, they do not stay even for a moment in the cage.

Moving and moving, they come near the ears, then turn back, entangled in the snare of the locks of hair. 'Soordas' says — the bird of the eyes, caught within beauty's qualities,

now flies away within. □

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That verse was sung by Surdasji. Afterward, Surdasji meditated upon the divine forms of the Divine Couple and, leaving his mortal body, attained entry into the eternal divine pastimes.

Then Shri Gusainji Himself proceeded to Gopalpur. After that, all the Vaishnavs together performed the cremation of Surdasji's body.

Thereafter, all the Vaishnavs came before Shri Gusainji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Surdasji was known by four names. Shri Acharyaji Himself called him “Sur.” Just as a warrior (sur) in battle never turns his back but always advances forward, in the same way, the devotion of Surdasji kept increasing day by day. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji called him “Sur.”

Shri Gusainji called him “Surdas,” because his feeling of being a sevak (servant of God) never diminished. The more his spiritual realization grew, the greater his humility became. Surdasji was never touched by pride or arrogance. Hence, the name “Surdas” was given to him.

His third name was “Surajdas.” Because Surdasji composed seven thousand verses describing the divine sentiments of Shri Swaminiji (Shri Radha), revealing the most profound emotions, Shri Swaminiji Herself said, “He is Suraj.” Just as the sun illuminates the world, Surdasji revealed divine brilliance through his compositions. Therefore, Shri Swaminiji named him “Surajdas.” From then on, Surdasji signed many of his kirtans with the mark “Suraj.”

The fourth name was “Sursyam.” Shri Govardhannathji Himself gave Surdasji twenty-five thousand kirtans and placed within them the seal “Sursyam.” Thus, the four divine names — “Sur,” “Surdas,” “Surajdas,” and “Sursyam” — were revealed for him. All four are found as seals in his kirtans.

Surdasji always remained absorbed in mental (manasi) seva — service performed in deep meditation. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji did not assign him any physical service (external deity worship). Why? Because Surdasji’s inner, meditative seva bore its own fruits of divine realization. He was perpetually immersed in the nectar of divine pastimes.

The supreme teaching of Surdasji’s life is this: there is no greater treasure than humility (dainyata), and no virtue higher than helping others. For the sake of even one merchant, Surdasji exerted great effort — yet by bringing him to acceptance, he saved and uplifted his soul.

Therefore, Shri Acharyaji, Shri Gusainji, and all the Vaishnavs were deeply pleased with Surdasji. Whoever came to Surdasji with questions, he lovingly explained to them the principles of the Path of Grace and directed their minds toward the Lord.

Thus, a divine soul like Surdasji, a beloved of the Lord, is exceedingly

rare even among millions. Surdasji was such a gracious recipient of the mercy of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Hence, the story of Surdasji is endless — it can only be told up to this point.

Varta 82 - Parmananddas

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Paramanand Swami, a Kanaujia Brahmin, lived in Kanauj. The feelings related to his story, whose compositions are sung among the Ashta Chhap poets, are described here.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Paramananddasji in the divine play (Leela) is the manifestation of “Tok Sakha,” one of the eight intimate friends (Ashta Sakha). Another form of this same Tok Sakha, in the divine bower (Nikunj), is as a female companion (Sakhi) named “Chandrabhaga.” She is the guardian at one of the gateways of Shri Giriraj near Surabhi Kund. Paramananddasji was born in Kanauj in the house of a Kanaujia Brahmin. On the day of his birth, a wealthy merchant donated a great amount of wealth to his father. The Brahmin was overjoyed and said, “Shri Thakurji has blessed me with both a son and great wealth. Therefore, this son is indeed very fortunate, for through his birth I have attained supreme bliss. I shall name him ‘Paramananddas.’”

Later, during the naming ceremony, the Brahmin said, “I had already decided earlier to name my son Paramanand.” Then, all the Brahmins present said, “The same name you chose is what appears in the birth chart as well.” Hearing this, the Brahmin became extremely happy. Later, the Brahmin performed the Jatakarma (birth rites) and gave much in charity. Thus, Paramananddas grew up gradually. His father held a grand celebration for his sacred-thread ceremony (Yajnopavit).

Paramananddas was deeply blessed, a beloved devotee of Bhagavan, and among those close to Shri Thakurji in His divine play. When Shri Acharyaji himself manifested on earth by the command of Shri Govardhannathji for the upliftment of divine souls, all of Shri Thakurji’s associates manifested with Him as well. Many divine souls appeared in different regions. Shri Gopaldasji has sung in Vallabhakhyan, “Out of mercy, many souls were manifested in different lands.”

In Kanauj, Paramananddasji spent his childhood in great joy. Later, he became very capable and was also an eminent poet. He composed and sang many devotional songs. He was called “Swami” and also rendered seva. Many learned devotees gathered around him in association.

Once, there was a famine in Kanauj, and the ruler's mind became disturbed. He imposed a tax on the village and looted all the wealth of Paramananddas's father. His parents became very sorrowful and said to Paramananddas, "We could not even marry you yet, and all our wealth is gone. Now you must find a way to earn money. Since you are talented and your work brings income, gather the money so we can arrange your marriage."

Paramananddas said to his parents, "I do not wish to marry. And you have already gathered much wealth—what effort did that bring? It has all vanished. The only true fruit of wealth is to feed Vaishnava Brahmins. Therefore, I will never accumulate wealth. You should take food from me daily as needed and keep chanting Shri Thakurji's name while sitting peacefully. Now that you have become poor, let go of your attachment to money."

Then his father said, "You have become a renunciate! Because of your association with renunciates, your mind has turned this way. But we are householders. Without accumulating wealth, how can we sustain our household? When we spend among relatives and society, we gain respect."

After that, his father went east seeking wealth but found no means there. Then he went south, where he obtained some money and stayed there. Meanwhile, Paramananddas formed a devotional singing (kirtan) group at home. His reputation spread from village to village, and he became well-known as an expert singer.

Prasang 1 – Paramanand Swami's Kirtan at Prayag and the

Devotee's Journey

Once, Paramananddas left Kanauj and went to Prayag for the Makar Snan (holy bath in the month of Makara). He stayed there and performed daily kirtans with his group. Many people came to listen to his singing.

Across the river, at Adel, Shri Acharyaji was residing. People from Adel would often visit the town for various purposes. After hearing Paramananddas's kirtans, they went back to Adel and told Shri Acharyaji, "A devotee named Paramananddas has come from Kanauj and sings kirtans most beautifully." Shri Acharyaji said, "Paramananddas is a divine soul. It is natural for him to have such

virtues."

Among Shri Acharyaji's sevaks, there was a Kapoor Kshatriya called Jalghariya. He had a deep attachment to music. Hearing this conversation, a thought arose in his mind: "I wish to go and listen to Paramanand Swami's singing. But if Shri Acharyaji finds out, He might become displeased that I left my seva to go there. So I cannot go to Prayag. Yet my heart greatly longs to hear Paramanand Swami's kirtan."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why was this so? Because he had a connection from a previous birth. In the divine play, this Kshatriya was a sakhi (female companion) of Paramananddas, named Sonnjuhi, a friend of Chandrabhaga.

This Kshatriya was born in Sudamapuri in a Kshatriya family. His father was deeply indulgent in worldly pleasures, constantly engaging with other women, and spent all his wealth on such pursuits. Eventually, the local king looted their house completely, and the Kshatriya's parents, along with their son, were imprisoned.

One night, his father bribed a guard and escaped with his wife and son. For two or three days, they kept running until they reached a dense forest. There, a tiger attacked and killed his parents, but the son, around fourteen years old, survived.

He sat in the forest crying, hungry, thirsty, and unable to move. By divine arrangement, Shri Acharyaji, while circumambulating the earth, came to that dense forest called Gahvarvan. Seeing the boy crying alone, he asked, "Who are you, and why are you weeping alone in this forest?" The boy bowed down and told his entire story.

Then Shri Acharyaji said to his sevak Krishnadas Meghan, "If there is any Mahaprasad, feed him quickly and give him water to drink, so that his life may be saved." Krishnadas Meghan had prasada, so he bathed the Kshatriya boy, fed him, and gave him water. The boy regained strength and composure.

The boy then prayed to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! Please keep me near you. I will remain your sevak for life. You are now my true father and mother." Shri Acharyaji said, "Do not worry. Stay with us." From then on, the boy stayed with Shri Acharyaji.

Later, Shri Acharyaji initiated him through Brahmasambandha and gave him the seva of fetching water. After some time, when Shri Acharyaji went to Adel, the Kshatriya received darshan of Shri

Navaneetpriyaji and became overjoyed. He said, “I was an orphan, but Shri Acharyaji showed me great mercy, accepted me, and brought me here. Now I have been blessed with the darshan of Shri Navaneetpriyaji, who is directly embraced by Mother Yashoda herself!”

The Kshatriya’s heart became deeply attached to the divine form of Shri Navaneetpriyaji. He thought, “If I could somehow receive seva of Shri Navaneetpriyaji, I would serve Him and behold His darshan forever.” Shri Acharyaji, being the Supreme Lord Himself, understood his heart. Calling him near, He said, “It is by great fortune that the desire for seva has arisen in your mind. Therefore, from now on, you shall perform the seva of fetching water for Shri Navaneetpriyaji.”

The Kshatriya joyfully bowed down and said, “Maharaj! What I desired in my heart, You have mercifully fulfilled completely.” Then, with deep devotion, the Kshatriya began fetching both sweet and salty water for the Lord. After some days, Shri Navaneetpriyaji began revealing His affection toward him. However, his seva left him no time to go and hear Paramanand Swami’s kirtans.

One day, on the occasion of Ekadashi, a Vaishnava came from Prayag to have Shri Acharyaji’s darshan at Adel. The Kshatriya Jalghariya asked this Vaishnava about Paramanand Swami. The Vaishnava said, “Every day, there is a kirtan gathering lasting four ghari (about 1.5 hours) or more during the night. And today, being Ekadashi, there will be an all-night kirtan.”

Hearing this, the Kshatriya was delighted and thought, “Tonight, I have an opportunity to hear Paramanand Swami’s kirtan. When Shri Acharyaji retires to rest, I shall quietly go to Prayag at night to listen.” That night, after Shri Acharyaji had retired, the Kshatriya completed his seva, listened to the Lord’s discourse, and around midnight (one and a half prahar), left Adel for Prayag.

He thought, “At this hour, no boats will be available at the riverbank, so I will swim across.” He was skilled at swimming. He reached the ghat, removed his upper garment, tied his small cloth and upper wrap on his head, and being summer, entered the river and swam to Prayag. Paramanand Swami was performing kirtan when he arrived. The Kshatriya had never met him before, so he sat at a distance.

Some Vaishnavas from Prayag, who knew him as Shri Acharyaji’s sevak, saw him and invited him to sit near them. They sat close to where Paramanand Swami was singing. After other learned singers

finished their songs, Paramanand Swami began singing verses of viraha (divine separation).

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why did he sing of separation? As mentioned earlier, Paramananddas in the divine play is separated from Shri Acharyaji and Shri Govardhannathji. As he has not yet received their darshan in this world, he sings of viraha (yearning). When Shri Acharyaji grants him the darshan of Shri Nathji, Paramananddas will realize his divine form in Leela. The path of Shri Acharyaji teaches that when one comes into association with Bhagavadiya (devotees of the Lord), Shri Thakurji bestows His grace.

Thus, Shri Acharyaji sent his blessed devotee, the Bhagavadiya Kshatriya Jalghariya, to bestow mercy upon Paramanand Swami. This Kshatriya was such that Shri Thakurji never left him, not even for a moment, and always remained with him. As Surdasji has sung — "When a devotee is afflicted with separation, the Compassionate Lord follows closely behind him."

And as mentioned earlier in the story of Jagannath Joshi — when a Rajput drew his sword, Shri Thakurji Himself came from behind, held the sword-bearing hand aloft, and prevented it from moving. In the Bhagavata too, it is described everywhere that Shri Thakurji always accompanies His devotees. Thus, Paramananddas, now separated, daily sings kirtans of divine separation (viraha).

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राग बहागरो -

ब्रज के बरही लोग बचारे। बनु गोपाल ठगे से ठाढे अ तदुबल तनु हारे ॥१॥

मात जसोदा पथ नहार त नरखत सांझ सवारे। जो कोऊ कान्ह कान्ह क ह टेरत अ खयन बहत पनारे ॥२॥

यह मथुरा काजर की रेखा जो नकसे सो कारे। 'परमानंद' स्वामी बनु ऐसे जैसे चंद बनु तारे ॥३॥

Raag Bihagro –

The people of Braj, separated and sorrowful, are miserable. Without Gopal, they stand

deceived and helpless, their bodies extremely weak and exhausted. 1

Mother Yashoda keeps watching the path, gazing again and again

from evening till

dawn. Whoever calls out “Kanha, Kanha!” — tears flow endlessly from their eyes. □2□

This line of kohl from Mathura that appears — it seems dark indeed. Without their

master ‘Parmanand’, they are like stars without the moon. □3□

राग बहागरो -

गोकुल सब गोपाल ऊपासी। जो गाहक साधन के उधो वे सब बरस ईस पु र कासी ॥ १।

जद प ह र हम तिज अनाथ करी अब छांडत क्यों र त की गांसी। अपनी सीतलता तऊ न छांडत यद्य प वधु भयो

राहु ग्रासी ॥२॥

क हं अपराध जोग ल ख पठयो प्रेम भजन तें करत उदासी । 'परमानंद' ऐसी को बरह न मांगे मिुक्त छां ड गुनरासी

॥३॥

Raag Bihagro –

All of Gokul worships Gopal. Those who were traders of spiritual means, all have now

gone to Kashi in this age. □1□

Even though Hari has abandoned us, making us orphans, why would He now abandon

even the bond of love? He still does not give up His coolness, even though the moon has

been swallowed by Rahu. □2□

For what offense has He sent a written decree, causing sadness in our loving devotion?

‘Parmanand’ says — such a woman, separated in longing, would abandon even

liberation, leaving behind all virtues. □3□

राग कान्हरो -

कौन र सक है इन बातन कौ । नंदनंदन बनु कास क हए सु नरी सखी मेरे दुःख यातन कौ ॥ १॥

कहां वह जमुना पु लन मनोहर कहां वह खटपट जल जातन कौ ॥। २॥

कहां वह सेज पौ ढवो ब को फूल बछौना मृदु पातन कौ। कहां वह दरस परस 'परमानंद' कमलनैन कोमल गातन कौ

॥ ३॥

Raag Kanharo –

Who among the rasiks can understand such words? Without Nandanandan, how can I

describe, O friend, the suffering and torment of my heart? □1□

Where is that lovely bank of the Yamuna now? Where is that playful splashing of water?

□2□

Where is that bed strewn with flowers, that soft couch of tender petals? Where is that

sight, that touch of ‘Parmanand’s’ lotus-eyed one with a tender body? □3□

राग सोरठ -

माई को म लवे नंद कसोरै । एक बार को नैन दखावे मेरे मन के चोरै ॥१॥

जागत जाम गनत नहीं खूटत क्यों पाउंगी भोरें। सु नरी सखी अब कैसे जीजे सु न तमचर खग रोरै ॥२॥

जो पै सत्य प्री त अंतरग त िज न काहुऽव नहोरै। 'परमानंद' प्रभु आन मलेंगे सखी सीस िज न फोरै ॥३॥

Raag Sorath –

O mother, when shall I meet Nandkishor? Just once may my eyes behold Him — the thief

of my heart! □1□

Nights pass sleeplessly, counting hours that never end — how will I

see the dawn?

Listen, my friend, how can one live after hearing the cries of the night birds? □2□

If there is true love within and no deceit toward anyone, ‘Parmanand’ says — the Lord

will surely come to meet her, that friend who would even break her head for His sake.

□3□

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Paramananddas sang many kirtans throughout the entire night, and so on. After that, when four ghari of the night remained, the kirtan was concluded. Those who had come for the night vigil all returned to their own homes. Afterward, this Jalghariya Kshatriya Kapoor, remembering the Lord, rose and departed from there.

Having listened to Paramanand Swami’s kirtan, he became very pleased in his heart and said, “Just as we had heard of Paramanand Swami’s qualities, so he truly is.” In this way, praising Paramanand Swami, Kshatriya Kapoor came to the bank of the Yamunaji and, in the same way, swam across. He bathed with his dhoti, upper cloth, and pardani, and came to Aparasahi. At that time, Shri Acharyaji Himself had awakened from sleep. Having had the darshan of Shri Acharyaji, he bowed down and became engaged in his seva of fetching water.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Thus, this Kshatriya Kapoor went to Paramanand Swami for the sake of showing grace upon him. Otherwise, Shri Thakurji Himself was affectionate toward him; why would such a Bhagavadiya go to anyone’s house? But grace was destined to be bestowed upon Paramanand Swami, so Shri Navneetpriyaji inspired the mind of that Kshatriya Kapoor Jalghariya and, going along with him, sat in his very lap and listened to Paramanand Swami’s kirtan.

In this way, when Kshatriya Jalghariya, having listened to Paramanand Swami’s kirtan, went from Prayag back to Adel, at that time Paramanand Swami, exhausted by the whole night, had also gone to sleep.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here, a doubt may arise:

Paramanand Swami kept vigil the whole night and then slept when four ghari of the last part of the night remained. If he slept, then the fruit of the vigil would be lost. But Paramanand Swami is wise and clever; why would he sleep?

The explanation is that Paramanand Swami is a Pushti-jiva related to the Leela. He desires only Shri Thakurji and does not desire the fruit of keeping vigil. He kept the Ekadashi vigil merely as a means to increase the chanting of the Lord's name. Therefore, he did not perform the vigil according to rule and ritual for the sake of its fruit. Thus, Paramananddas slept when four ghari of the last part of the night remained. From this it may be that the fruit of the vigil is lost, but the chanting of the Lord's name—the merit of that never perishes at any time. Hence, for the sake of taking the Lord's name, he slept for the last four ghari of the night.

Why? If he did not sleep, then on the day of Dwadashi there would be lethargy in the body. And again, on the night of Dwadashi, he had to perform kirtan for one and a half pahar of the night. Therefore, abandoning reliance on the vigil and taking reliance on the Lord's name, he slept.

As soon as sleep came, Paramanand Swami had a dream. In the dream he saw that Shri Acharyaji's sevak, the Kshatriya, was sitting in the vigil. And he saw Shri Navneetpriyaji sitting in his lap. And Shri Navneetpriyaji, smiling in the dream, commanded Paramanand Swami, "Today I have listened to your kirtans. The gracious sevak of Shri Acharyaji, the Kapoor Kshatriya Jalghariya, came to your night vigil. Therefore, I came along with him. Thus, in all these days, today I have listened to your kirtans."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here, one may doubt: Shri Thakurji always listens and is all-pervading everywhere. Why then say, "Today I listened"? The answer is that for so many days there had been a looseness in formal acceptance; thus, as the indwelling witness He heard. Now acceptance is to be made and grace to be bestowed, so He revealed the sign of quickly bestowing grace. Therefore He said, "Today I have listened to your kirtans. Today I have bestowed complete grace upon you. Therefore, now you will quickly attain Me." This is the meaning to be understood.

Then Paramanand Swami awoke from sleep. In his eyes, the form of Shri Navneetpriyaji—of beauty surpassing a hundred million Cupids—had appeared in the dream. Thus, knowledge arose in his eyes and heart. Then a great restlessness and anguish arose in Paramanand

Swami's mind: "When shall I now have the darshan of Shri Navneetpriyaji?"

Thereafter, Paramanand Swami thought in his heart: "I have kept vigil for so many days and have also sung kirtans, yet I never had such a darshan as I had today. The sevak of Shri Acharyaji, the Jalghariya Kshatriya Kapoor, came; thus, it happened in his lap. Without that Kshatriya Kapoor, I will not obtain the darshan of Shri Navneetpriyaji. Therefore, let us go to him and meet him; then my purpose will be accomplished." Thinking this in his mind, Paramanand Swami immediately rose and set out for Adel. Meanwhile, it was morning. He came to the bank of Shriyamunaji, and the very first boat crossed over; sitting in it, Paramanand Swami came across.

At that time, Shri Acharyaji had bathed in Shriyamunaji and was performing the morning sandhya. The darshan of Shri Acharyaji appeared to Paramanand Swami as wondrous, supernatural, the very form of Shri Krishna. Just as Shri Gusainji has described in the Shri Vallabhashtak—"Vastutah Krishna eva"—having such a darshan, Paramanand Swami stood astonished. No words came out.

Then Paramanand Swami thought in his heart, "Why would Shri Navneetpriyaji not listen to my kirtans sitting in the lap of Shri Acharyaji's sevak, the Kapoor Kshatriya, upon whose head Shri Acharyaji Himself, such a wealthy Lord, resides? Therefore, I too shall become his sevak. But I do not have the capability to request to become his sevak. So if that Kshatriya meets me again, I shall tell him everything and beg to become a sevak."

While Paramanand Swami was thinking this in his heart, at that very moment Shri Acharyaji Himself, from His holy mouth, commanded Paramanand Swami, "Paramananddas! Sing some divine Leela." Then Paramananddasji, offering full prostration to Shri Acharyaji, sang these verses.

राग सारंग -

कौन बेर भई चलेरी गोपालें। हो ननसार गई ही न्योंते बार-बार बूझ त ब्रजबालें ॥१॥

तेरे तन को रूप कहां गयो भा म न और मुखकमल सुकाइ रह्यो। सब सौभाग्य गयो ह र के संग हदौ सकोमल बरह

दह्यो ॥।२॥

को बोलै को नैन उघारे को उत्तर दे ह बकल मन । सो सरवसु अनुर चुरायो 'परमानंदस्वामी' जीवन धन ॥३॥

Raag Sarang –

When did Gopal leave, and where did He go? He went to Nansar, having been invited

again and again by the maidens of Braj. □1□

O beautiful one, where has the radiance of your body gone? Your lotus-like face has

withered away. All your good fortune departed along with Hari, and your tender heart

has been burned by the fire of separation. □2□

Who speaks now, whose eyes even open, who will answer in this troubled mind?

‘Parmanand Swami’ — He has stolen all your wealth of love, your very treasure of life.

□3□

राग सारंग -

सय की सा ध िजय ही रही री। बहु र गोपाल देखन नहीं पाए बलप त कुंज अहीरी ॥१॥

इक दन सो जु सखी यह मारगु बेचन जा त दही री। प्री त के लए दान मस मोहन मेरी बांह गही री ॥२॥

बनु देखे छन जात कलप भ र वरहा अनल दहीरी। 'परमानंदस्वामी' बनु दरसन नैन न नदी बहीरी ॥३॥

Raag Sarang –

Siy’s (the beloved’s) hope remained only in her heart. She could not see Gopal again and

keeps lamenting in the groves of Ahir. □1□

One day, that same friend was selling curd along this very path. For the sake of love,

Mohan came in disguise and held my arm! □2□

Without seeing Him, even a moment feels like an age, the fire of separation burns

fiercely. ‘Parmanand Swami’ — without His vision, the rivers of tears flow from my eyes.

□3□

राग सारंग -

यह बात कमल दल नैन की। बार-बार सु ध आवत सजनी वह दुरी देनी सेन की ॥ १॥

वह लीला वह रास सरद को गौरज रं◌िजत आवनी। अरू वह उंची टेर मनोहर मस क र मो ह बुलावनी ॥२॥

वे बातें साल त उर अंतर को पर पीर ह पावे। 'परमानंद' कह्यो न परे कछु हयो सुरुंध्यो आवे ॥३॥

Raag Sarang –

This thought comes again and again about His lotus-petal eyes. O friend, my mind

constantly remembers that distant army of attendants. □1□

That Leela, that Raas of the autumn night, that moonlit ground glowing in beauty, And

those sweet, elevated calls that enchantingly called me near. □2□

Those memories burn within the heart, piercing it with pain. ‘Parmanand’ says —

nothing can be spoken of it; the heart is bound and fragrant with that memory. □3□

राग सारंग -

सु ध करत कमलदल नैन की । भ र भ र ले त नीर अ त आतुर र त वृन्दावन चैन की ॥१॥

दे-दे गाढे आ लंगन मलती कुंजलता द्रुम ऐन की । वे बातें कैसे के बसर त बाह उसीसे सेन की ॥ २॥

ब स नकुंज रास खलाए व्यथा गँवाई मेन की। 'परमानंद प्रभु सो क्यों जीव ह जो पोखी मृद्ध बेन की ॥।३॥

Raag Sarang –

Thinking of His lotus-petal eyes, I keep filling my eyes with tears, restless for the peace

of Vrindavan's love. 1

In the groves and beneath the vines and trees, He used to meet me in deep embrace. How

can those moments be forgotten — the same place where He gathered His companions?

2

Within the secret grove, He bloomed the Raas and removed all the sorrows of my heart.

'Parmanand' says — how can one live without the Lord who played the tender flute? 3

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In this way, Paramananddas sang verses of separation (viraha) before Shri Acharyaji. After hearing them, Shri Acharyaji said with His divine lips, "Paramananddas! Now sing some verses describing the childhood pastimes (Bal Leela) of the Lord." Then Paramananddas, joining his hands humbly, said to Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! I do not understand much about the childhood pastimes."

Then Shri Acharyaji, with His divine lips, instructed Paramananddas, "Go and bathe in the sacred river Shriyamunaji; after you return, I shall make you understand." After that, Paramananddas asked Shri Acharyaji, "Maharaj! Where is Your sevak, Kshatriya Kapoor?" Then Shri Acharyaji said, "He must be engaged somewhere in seva (service)." So Paramananddas went to bathe in Shriyamunaji, while Shri Acharyaji, since it was the time for seva, quickly went into the temple. He awakened Shri Navneetpriyaji.

Just then, Kshatriya Jalghariya came to the opposite bank of Shriyamunaji with a water pot to fetch water. Seeing him, Paramanand Swami was filled with supreme bliss. Joining both hands in devotion and remembering the Lord, he said, "The night when you kindly came to my vigil, Shri Navneetpriyaji sat in your lap and listened to my kirtans. Later, when I slept, Shri Navneetpriyaji gave me His darshan and, showing mercy, said, 'Today I have listened to your kirtans.' Therefore, you have shown great kindness to me.

Now I have come for your darshan. Please show me the same compassion that Shri Acharyaji has shown by accepting me into refuge, and the grace that Shri Thakurji bestows by giving daily darshan. Shri Acharyaji has kindly granted me the darshan of the divine form of Shri Krishna — this is the glory of your holy association."

Hearing these words, the Kshatriya Kapoor said to him, "Shri Acharyaji has bestowed His grace upon you; that is why you have had such a darshan. He has also commanded you to take shelter, so now quickly bathe, and as soon as you come out, go straight to Shri Acharyaji. The Lord will graciously accept you into His refuge, and then all your desires will be fulfilled. Also, do not tell Shri Acharyaji that I came to your vigil at night; otherwise, He will be displeased with me, asking, 'Why did you leave your seva and go?'"

After saying this, the Kshatriya Vaishnava filled his water pot from Shriyamunaji, while Paramananddas, having bathed, came out and followed the Kshatriya Jalghariya to Shri Acharyaji's place. At that time, Shri Acharyaji had adorned Shri Navneetpriyaji, offered the bhog of Shri Gopivallabh, and was seated in divine splendor. Paramananddas arrived just then, purified after his bath.

Shri Acharyaji said to Paramananddas, "Paramananddas, sit down." Then Paramananddas offered full prostration before Shri Acharyaji and sat down. After that, Shri Acharyaji went inside, completed the bhog-offering, and called Paramananddas close. Out of grace, in the divine presence of Shri Navneetpriyaji, He whispered the sacred Name in his ear and initiated him with Brahmasambandha. Then Shri Acharyaji recited to him the Anukramanika (index of contents) of the Tenth Canto of the Shri Bhagavatam.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason behind this is as follows: At first, Shri Acharyaji had said to Paramananddas, "Describe some divine pastimes of the Lord." Then Paramananddas sang verses of separation (viraha). Later, Shri Acharyaji said to him, "Sing of the childhood pastimes (Bal Leela)."

The reason for this is that Bal Leela refers to the pastimes of Shri Nandaraya's house, which are of samyog-rasa (union, joyful communion). When union occurs once, thereafter its result is separation (viraha). Why? Because in the Ras Panchadhyayi of the Bhagavatam, the Lord first called the devotees of Braj and performed the divine Rasa Leela with them. Afterwards, when He became unseen, the result was separation. Hence the Lord said: "Just as a poor

man, having found wealth and then losing it, constantly thinks of it." (Bhagavatam 10.29.38)

In the same way, first Shri Acharyaji asked Paramananddas to sing Bal Leela — because through the experience of union, understanding of separation matures more quickly. But Paramananddas prayed, "Maharaj! I do not understand much." His meaning was this — that the samyog-rasa (union) was not yet awakened within him. The original Leela in which he once participated was forgotten. Being separated in Leela and being a divine soul, he had sung only of viraha from birth.

Now, through the offering of the Divine Name (Nama Samarpan), Shri Acharyaji removed the obstacle of ignorance. Then He recited to him the Anukramanika of the Tenth Canto of the Bhagavatam. At that moment, Paramananddas experienced direct realization of Shri Navneetpriyaji's divine form, and the entire sequence of the Tenth Canto's divine pastimes was revealed within him.

The reason Shri Acharyaji recited the Anukramanika of the Tenth Canto was that it is the most exalted scripture revealed by Shri Gusainji. In it, Shri Acharyaji's name is praised as "Shri Bhagavata-Piyusha-Samudra-Mathana-Kshamah" — "He who is capable of churning the ocean of nectar that is the Bhagavatam."

Thus, Shri Gusainji described the Bhagavatam as an ocean of nectar. By means of the Anukramanika, Shri Acharyaji established that ocean of the Bhagavatam within the heart of Paramananddas. Similarly, He had earlier established the same ocean within the heart of Surdas through the Anukramanika.

Therefore, though many Vaishnavas are the blessed recipients of Shri Acharyaji's grace, only Surdas and Paramananddas became "oceans." The number of their kirtans cannot be counted; hence, both are called "Sagar" (oceans).

Thus, Shri Acharyaji commanded, "Now sing of the childhood pastimes (Bal Leela)." Then, having now experienced samyog-rasa (union and divine joy), Paramananddasji sang before Shri Acharyaji the verses of Bal Leela. Those verses were

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राग आसावरी -

माईरी ! कमल नैन स्यामसुन्दर झूलत हैं पलना। बाललीला गाव त सब गोकुल की ललना ॥।१॥

लालके अरुन तरुन चरनकमल नख-म न स स-ज्योती। कुिञ्जत कच भवराकृ त लर लटके गज-मोती ॥२॥

लाल अंगुठा ग ह कमल पा न मेलत मुख मांही। अपनो प्र त बंब दे ख पु न पु न मु सकाहीं ॥३॥

रानी जसुम त के पुन्य पुंज नर ख नर ख लाल । 'परमानंदस्वामी' गोपाल सुत सनेह पालें ॥४॥

Raag Asavari –

O mother! The lotus-eyed, beautiful Shyamsundar swings in His cradle. All the maidens

of Gokul sing of His playful childhood pastimes. □1□

The tender red soles of His feet shine with the radiance of the moon from the jewels on

His nails. His curling locks resemble a swarm of bees, and His dangling curls glimmer

like pearls of the elephant. □2□

The little one grasps His red thumb in His lotus-like hand and brings it near His mouth.

Seeing His own reflection, He smiles again and again. □3□

Beholding the blessed accumulation of Queen Yashoda's merits, 'Parmanand Swami'

says — she lovingly nurtures her dear son Gopal. □4□

राग बलावल –

जसोदा !तेरे भाग्यकी कहीय न जाइ। जो मूर त ब्रह्मा दक दुलभ सो प्रगटे हैं आई ॥१॥

सय नारद सनका द महामु न म लवे करत उपाई । ते नन्दलाल धू रधूसर वपु रहत कण्ठ लपटाई ॥२॥

रतन ज टत पौढाय पालने वदन दे ख मु सकाई। झूलो मेरे लाल जाऊँ ब लहारी 'परमानंद' ब ल जाऊ ॥३॥

Raag Bilawal –

Yashoda! Words cannot describe your fortune. That divine form, rare even for Brahma

and the great gods to behold, has appeared before you! 1

Sita, Narad, Sanak, and all the great sages strive for even a glimpse of Him — Yet

Nandalal, covered in dust, clings around your neck with affection. 2

In a cradle adorned with jewels, seeing His radiant face, you smile in joy. “Swing, my

little one!” — I offer myself to Him again and again, says ‘Parmanand’. 3

राग बलावत-

म नमै आंगन नन्द के खेलत दोऊ भैया। गौर स्याम जोरी बनी बल कुंवर कन्हैया ॥१॥

नपुरु कङ्कन कंकना रुनझुन बाजे । मो ह रही ब्रज सुन्द र मन सज सु न लाजे ॥२॥

सङ्ग जसुम त रो हणी हतका रनी मैया । चुटकी दे दे नचावही सुत जा न नन्हैया ॥३॥

नीलपीत पट ओढनी देखत मो ह भावे । बाल वनोद प्रमोद सो ´परमानंद' गावे ॥४॥

Raag Bilawal –

In Nanda’s jeweled courtyard, the two brothers play together — The fair one and the

dark one, together form the lovely pair, Bal and Kanhaiya. 1

The anklets and bangles jingle sweetly — Even the beautiful women of Braj blush,

hearing the melody of their sound. 2

Along with Yashoda and Rohini, the affectionate mothers, They clap their hands and

make their little sons dance, knowing them to be divine infants. 3

Wrapped in garments of blue and yellow, they delight the eyes. ‘Parmanand’ sings

joyfully of these playful childhood pastimes. 4

राग कान्हरो -

प्यारे ह र कौ जस गाव त गोपांगना । म नमय आंगन नन्दराय के बाल वनोद करत हैं रंगना ॥१॥

ग र ग र उठत घुटुरुवन टेकत जानुपा न मेरो छगन कौ मगना । धूसर धू र उठाय गोद ले मात यसोदा के प्रेम को

भजना ॥२॥

त्रपद पहु म नापी तब न आलस भयो अब जो क ठन भयो दहेरी उल्लंघना। 'परमानंद प्रभु' भक्तवत्सल ह र रु चर

हार वरकंठ सोहे बघना ॥३॥

Raag Kanharo –

The Gopi maidens sing lovingly of the glories of dear Hari. In Nanda's jeweled courtyard,

the child plays and crawls about in delight. □1□

He rises, tottering, taking support on His knees and hands — my little dark one! Raising clouds of dust, Mother Yashoda takes Him in her arms, filled with love and devotion. □2□

When He measured three steps of the courtyard, no weariness touched Him — Now,

leaping across the doorway, He showed His growing strength. 'Parmanand Prabhu' says

— the loving Lord Hari, with a shining garland around His neck, delights His devotees.

□3□

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Paramananddas sang many such verses describing the childhood pastimes (Bal Leela). Hearing them, Shri Acharyaji became very pleased. After that, Paramananddas stayed at Adel near Shri Acharyaji.

Then Shri Acharyaji said to Paramananddas, "From now on, you must regularly sing verses suited to the time and occasion before Shri Navneetpriyaji. This seva is now given to you." So Paramananddas composed new verses daily and sang them at the appropriate times before Shri Navneetpriyaji. Whenever Shri Navneetpriyaji retired for rest, Paramananddas would sing many kirtans describing the Braj

Leelas before Shri Acharyaji.

And Shri Acharyaji Himself would narrate the divine discourses of Shri Subodhini. The kirtans that Paramananddas composed always related to the very prasang (episode) or topic that Shri Acharyaji had explained through His divine lips. After listening to those discourses, Paramananddas would later sing kirtans corresponding to that same prasang before Shri Acharyaji.

Prasang 2 – The Glory of Shri Thakurji's Lotus Feet

One day, Paramananddas heard from the divine lips of Shri Acharyaji the discourse describing the greatness and glory of Shri Thakurji's lotus feet. At that very time, Paramananddas sang a kirtan before Shri Acharyaji in praise of the lotus feet of Shri Thakurji, filled with their divine glory. That verse was

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राग कान्हरो -

चरनकमल वंदो जगदीस जे गोधन के सङ्ग धाए। जे पद कमल धू र लपटाने कर ग ह गो पन उर लाए ॥१॥

जे पद कमल यु धिष्टर पिूजत राजसूयमें च ल आए। जे पदकमल पतामह भीषम भारत में देखन पाए ॥२॥

जे पदकमल संभु चतुरानन हुदै कमल अंतर राखे। जे पद कमल रमा-उर भूषन वेद भागवत मु न साखे ॥३॥

जे पद कमल लोकत्रय पावन ब लराजा के पीठ धरें। सो पद कमल 'दास परमानंद' गावत प्रेम पीयूष भरे ॥४॥

Raag Kanharo –

I bow to the lotus feet of the Lord of the world, Those very feet that ran among the cows

of Gokul, Those lotus feet covered with the dust of the cowherds, which the Gopis

lovingly clasped to their hearts. □1□

Those lotus feet that were worshiped by Yudhishthir during the Rajasuya sacrifice,

Those same feet that the grandsire Bhishma beheld in the battle of Bharat

(Kurukshetra). □2□

Those lotus feet that Lord Shambhu (Shiva) and the four-faced Brahma keep within the

lotus of their hearts, Those lotus feet that adorn the bosom of Lakshmi, praised by the

Vedas, the Bhagavat, and the sages. □3□

Those lotus feet that sanctified the three worlds when King Bali placed them upon his

head — Those very feet, 'Sevak Parmanand' sings of, filled with the nectar of divine love.

□4□

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After that, Paramananddas sang a verse of prayer before Shri Acharyaji. That verse was

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राग कान्हरो -

यह मांगो गोपीजनवल्लभ। मानुस जनम और ह र की सेवा ब्रज ब सवो दीजे मोही सुलभ ॥१॥

श्रीवल्लभकुल कौ हो चेरो वैष्णवजन कौं दास कहाऊँ। श्रीयमुनाजल नत प्र त न्हाऊँ मन क्रम बचन कृष्ण गुन गाऊँ

॥२॥

श्रीमभागवत श्रवन सुनों नत्य इन तिज चत्त कहूँ अनत न लाऊँ। परमानंददास यह मांगत नत नरखो कबहू अघाऊँ

॥३॥

Raag Kanharo –

This is what I ask, O Beloved of the Gopis! Grant me a human birth and the service of

Hari, And make my dwelling in Braj easily attainable. 1

Let me be a sevak of the lineage of Shri Vallabh, And be called a das among the

Vaishnavs. May I daily bathe in the sacred waters of Shri Yamuna, And with mind, action,

and speech, sing the glories of Krishna. 2

May I listen to the recitations of the Shrimad Bhagavat daily, And apart from this, may

my mind never be drawn elsewhere. 'Parmanand Das' always asks for this —

That he may behold the Lord again and again, never feeling satiated. 3

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Then Paramananddas sang this verse. Hearing it, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu understood that in this verse Paramananddas was praying for the darshan of Braj. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji resolved to certainly grant Paramananddas the darshan of Braj. After that, Shri Acharyaji prepared to journey to Braj. Taking along Damodardas Harsani, Krishnadas Meghan, Paramananddas, Yadavendradas, and other Vaishnavas, Shri Acharyaji set out from Adel toward Braj. On the way to Braj, they came to Paramananddas's village, Kanauj. Then Paramananddas humbly requested Shri Acharyaji to visit his home.

Considering this a great blessing and filled with supreme joy, Paramananddas welcomed Shri Acharyaji to his home and quickly brought all the necessary materials from the market. With deep humility, he earnestly requested all the Vaishnavas who were present and personally distributed to each of them the required ingredients for cooking.

Then Shri Acharyaji Himself prepared both sweet and unsweetened dishes, offered them as bhog to Shri Thakurji, and after the offering (bhog saraya), He took the meal. Afterwards, He distributed Mahaprasad to Paramananddas and all the Vaishnavas. After the meal, Shri Acharyaji rested, reclining on His cushion and seat. Then Paramananddas, having taken Mahaprasad, came near Shri Acharyaji, offered dandvat pranam (full prostration), and sat down.

Shri Acharyaji then said, “Paramananddas! Sing some praises of the Lord.” Then Paramananddas thought in his heart, “At this time, Shri Acharyaji’s mind is dwelling in the Braj Leelas near Shri Govardhannathji. Therefore, I should sing a verse of viraha (divine separation), in which even a single moment passes like an age.” That verse was.

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राग सोरठ –

ह र तेरी लीला की सु ध आवे। कमलनैन मनमोहन मूर त मन मन चत्र बनावे ॥१॥

एकवार जा ह मलत मया क र सो कैसे बसरावे। मुख मुसक्यान बंक अवलोकन चाल मनोहर भावे ॥२॥

कबहु न वड त मर आ लंगत कबहुक पकसुर गावे। कबहुक संभ्रम क्वा स क्वा स क ह संग ह उ ठ धावे ॥३॥

कबहुक नैन मूं द अन्तर ग त म णमाला पहरावे। 'परमानंद प्रभु' स्याम ध्यान क र ऐसे वरह गवावे ॥४॥

Raag Sorath –

O Hari, the remembrance of Your divine play arises in my mind. Your lotus eyes and

enchanting form, O Manmohan, are painted as an image within my heart. □1□

Once someone meets You and experiences Your grace — how could they ever forget?

Your smiling face, Your sidelong glances, and Your graceful walk captivate the mind

completely. □2□

At times, You embrace in the deep darkness of night; at times, the cuckoo sings

melodiously. At times, in excitement, You murmur softly and suddenly run forward to

meet. □3□

At times, closing the eyes in deep meditation, one adorns You inwardly with a garland of

jewels. ‘Parmanand Prabhu’ — through such remembrance and contemplation of Shyam,

expresses the pain of separation. □4□

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Then Paramananddas sang this verse. In that verse, he said, “Hari, the memory of Your divine play arises within me.” Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji Himself became deeply absorbed in divine Leela.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In the Shri Vallabhashtak, Shri Gusainji has described the form of Shri Acharyaji as — “Shreemad Vrindavanenduḥ prakatita rasikananda sandoha roopa sphurjad rasadi leelamrita” — meaning that The glorious Moon of Vrindavan (Śrīmad Vṛndāvanenduḥ), who is the embodiment of the manifested essence of the collective bliss of divine rasikas (devoted lovers of the Lord), radiantly reveals the nectar of His pastimes, beginning with the divine play of rasa (love).

And in the Sarvottam Granth, Shri Gusainji has named Shri Acharyaji as Rasaleeleka Tatparyaya Namah — “He whose sole intent is the Ras-Leela.” Thus, the purpose of all the scriptures composed by Shri Acharyaji is centered upon the Ras-Leela alone; He has no other purpose. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji became completely immersed in the Ras-Leela. In that state, he lost all awareness of the physical body.

For three days continuously, Shri Acharyaji remained in this divine trance. With eyes closed, He sat upon His seat and cushion.

Damodardas Harsani and the other Vaishnavas, who knew the divine nature of Shri Mahaprabhuji, understood what was happening. None of them spoke; they quietly remained seated, silently beholding Shri Acharyaji's divine form.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why so? Because Shri Acharyaji is Himself the complete Purushottam (Supreme Being). The natural laws of the body cannot obstruct Him. Though He has taken on a human form, He only displays human-like actions for the sake of the world. Bodily limitations cannot bind Him. Therefore, all His sevaks sat quietly for three days. Then, on the fourth day, Shri Acharyaji opened His eyes, fully alert, and all the Vaishnavas rejoiced in great happiness.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here a question may arise — why did He remain absorbed in the Ras and other divine Leelas for three full days? The explanation is this: in the Ras and similar Leelas, there are three primary places — Shri Giriraj, Shri Vrindavan, and Shriyamunaji. Shri Giriraj represents the divine form and provides all the materials for Leela. Shri Vrindavan embodies the emotional essence of the Leela — the Ras-filled divine bowers. Shriyamunaji is the very root of all Ras-Leelas.

Thus, these are the Leelas of both water and land. On the first day, Shri Acharyaji experienced the Leela connected to Shri Giriraj — the many enjoyments within His caves, as Chaturbhujdasji has sung, "Shri Govardhan Giri Saghana Kandara…" On the second day, He experienced the Leelas of Vrindavan. On the third day, the Ras and Jal-Leelas (water pastimes) on the sandy banks of Shriyamunaji.

In this way, He experienced the full sweetness of the three Rasas across the three days. Thereafter, He manifested again upon the earth to spread the path of devotion (Bhakti Marg), granting refuge to countless souls and enabling them to experience the divine Leela-Rasa. On the fourth day, Shri Acharyaji opened His eyes and became alert. Then Paramananddas felt fear in his heart, thinking, "I shall never again sing such verses."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Paramananddas felt afraid, thinking, "If Shri Acharyaji becomes absorbed in the experience of Ras again, He might not return to the earthly plane of consciousness. Then how will the deliverance of the divine souls take place?" Therefore,

Paramananddas decided in his heart, “I will never again sing verses of viraha (separation) before Shri Acharyaji.” Why? Because Shri Acharyaji Himself is the very embodiment of viraha-rasa.

In the Sarvottam Granth, Shri Gusainji has described Him as — “Viraha-anubhav-ekarthah sarva-tyagopadeshakah” — “He who, for the experience of the state of divine separation (viraha), renounced all worldly and Vedic pursuits, and thus teaches complete renunciation.” In this, the essence of viraha is revealed — when one, in the state of separation, ceases to care even for worldly or ritualistic duties, only then true viraha has arisen. After that, Paramananddas sang verses of a gentle and auspicious nature. That verse was

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राग रामकली -

माईरी ! हों आनन्द मंगल गाऊँ। गोकुल की चंताम ण माधौ जो मांगो सो पाऊँ ॥१॥

जब तें कमल नैन ब्रज आए सकल संपदा बाढी। नंदराय के द्वारे देखो अष्ट महा सद् ध ठाढी ॥२॥

फूले फले सदा वृन्दावन कामधेनु दु ह लीजे। मांग्यो मेह ईंद्र बरसावे कृष्ण कृपा तें जीजे ॥॥ ३॥

कहत जसोदा स खयन आगे ह र उत्कष जनावे। 'परमानंद' कौ ठाकुर मुरली मनोहर भावे ॥४॥

Raag Ramkali –

O mother! I sing songs of joy and auspiciousness. In Gokul, the wish-fulfilling gem is

Madhav Himself — whatever one asks for, one receives. 1

Since the lotus-eyed Lord came to Braj, all prosperity has increased. Behold at Nandarai’s

door — the eight great perfections stand there waiting. 2

Vrindavan ever blossoms and bears fruit; the divine cow Kamadhenu is milked there.

When rain is desired, Indra pours it forth — all thrive by Krishna’s grace. 3

Yashoda, speaking before her friends, proclaims the Lord’s supreme glory.

‘Parmanand’s’ Thakur, the flute-playing Manohar, enchants all hearts.

□4□

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After that, Shri Acharyaji took His meal and lay down to rest. Then all the Vaishnavas partook of Mahaprasad. Afterward, Paramananddas, having taken Mahaprasad, came before Shri Acharyaji and sang verses.

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राग गोरी -

बमल जस वृन्दावन के चंद कौ। काह प्रकास सोम सूरज कौ जो मेरे गो वंद कौ ॥१॥

कह त जसोदा औरन आगे वैभव आनन्द-कन्द कौ। खेलत फरत गोप-बालक संग ठाकुर 'परमानंद' कौ ॥२॥

Raag Gauri –

Pure is the glory of the Moon of Vrindavan — What need is there for the light of the sun

or moon when my Govind shines forth? □1□

Yashoda speaks before others of the splendor and blissful nature of her Lord —

'Parmanand's' Thakur plays and wanders joyfully among the cowherd boys. □2□

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Then Paramananddas sang this verse. That verse was —

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राग सारंग -

च ल सखी नदंगाम जाइ ब सए। ख रक- खेलत ब्रजचंद जु सो ह सए ॥१॥

ब स बठेन सबै सुख माई एक क ठन दुख दूर कन्हाई ॥२॥

माखन चोरत दु र दु र देखो, सजनी जनम सुफल कर लेखों ॥३॥

जलचर लोचन छनु छनु प्यासा। क ठन प्री त परमानंददासा ॥४॥

Raag Sarang –

Come, friend, let us go and live in the village of Nanda! There, the Moon of Braj plays

joyfully with butter and smiles delightfully. □1□

All who dwell there live in bliss, O mother — For one difficult sorrow, Kanhaiya removes

it completely. □2□

See, dear friend, how He steals butter from afar again and again — Truly, such a birth is

blessed and fulfilled! □3□

Like a water creature ever thirsting for sight, the eyes long every moment to behold Him.

Such deep love belongs to 'Parmanand Das'. □4□

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Then Paramananddas sang this verse. Hearing it, Shri Acharyaji said, "Now let us go to Braj." After that, Paramananddas brought before Shri Acharyaji all those whom he had previously initiated as sevaks and humbly requested, "Maharaj! Please accept these souls and grant them refuge." Then Shri Acharyaji said to Paramananddas, "You have already given them the divine Name and made them sevaks. So why do you now bring them to Me to make them sevaks again?"

Paramananddas replied, "Maharaj! At that time, I was in the earlier state of Swamipana (self-perceived ownership). Therefore, I had made them sevaks. But now, I myself have become Your das (servant). The position of Swami belongs only to the true Master. If a das desires the status of Swami, he is a fool. Out of ignorance, I made them sevaks. Now, please accept them into Your shelter and grant them deliverance." Then Shri Acharyaji mercifully recited the Divine Name to all of them and accepted them as sevaks.

After that, taking along all the Vaishnavas including Paramananddas, Shri Acharyaji departed from Kanauj and journeyed toward Braj. Within a few days, they arrived at Shri Gokul. There, Shri Acharyaji bathed at Govind Ghat, and after bathing, He came beneath the Chhonkar and took His seat at His own place of sitting.

Inside, there was a chamber near the temple of Shri Dwarikanathji —

that was the place where Shri Acharyaji used to rest at night whenever He came to Gokul. This was known as the inner seat (bhitar ki baithak). It was at this same place that Shri Acharyaji had rocked Shri Navneetpriyaji's cradle and celebrated the festival of Dadhika Dola on the day of Janmashtami, as already described earlier in the story of Gajan Dhawan.

Thus, having bathed, Shri Acharyaji sat beneath the Chhonkar at His seat. Then all the Vaishnavas, including Paramananddas, after bathing, came and sat near the Lord (Shri Acharyaji). Afterward, Shri Acharyaji taught Paramananddas the recitation of the Shriyamunashtak. Upon hearing it, the divine form of Shriyamunaji manifested vividly in Paramananddas's heart. Then he composed and sang the praises describing the glory of Shriyamunaji. Those verses were —

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राग रामकली -

श्रीयमुनाजी ! यह प्रसाद हों पाऊँ। तहारे नकट रहों नसबासर राम कृष्ण गुन गाऊँ ॥ १॥

मजन करों बमल जल पावन चंता कलह बहाऊँ। तहारी कृपा तें भानु की तनया ह र पद प्री त बढाऊँ ॥२॥

बनती करों यही वर मांगों अधम संग बसराऊँ। 'परमानंद' चा र फलदाता मदनगोपाल लडाऊँ ॥ ३॥

Raag Ramkali –

O Shri Yamunaji! May I receive this blessing — That I may live near You day and night,

singing the glories of Ram and Krishna. 1

May I bathe in Your pure and sacred waters and wash away all worries and conflicts. By

Your grace, O daughter of the Sun, may my love for Hari's feet ever increase. 2

I make this prayer and ask for this one boon — that I may forget the company of the

unworthy. 'Parmanand' seeks only this — to lovingly serve Madangopal, the bestower of

the four goals of life. □3□

राग रामकली -

श्रीयमुनाजी दीन जा न मो ह दीजे। नंद को लाल सदा बर मांगो गो पन की दासी मो ह कीजे ॥१॥

तुम हो परम उदार कृपा न ध चरन सरन सुखकारी। तहारे बस सदा ला डलीवर वतत नतत ग रवरधारी ॥२॥

ब्रजनारी सब खेल त ह रसंग अद्भुतरास बलासी । तहारे पु लन म ध कुंज द्रुम कमल पुहूप सुखरासी ॥३॥

श्रमजल भ र न्हात ब्रजसुन्द र जलक्रीडा सुखकारी। मनहु तारा मध्य चन्द वराजत भ र भ र छरकत नारी ॥४॥

रानी जू के पांइ परों नत्य गृहकारज सब कीजै। 'परमानंददास' दासी व्ह चरन कमल सुख दीजे ॥ ५॥

Raag Ramkali –

O Shri Yamunaji! Knowing me to be lowly, bless me. May I ever beg for the boon of being

the maidservant of the Gopis, devoted to Nanda's son. □1□

You are supremely generous, a treasure of compassion, And at Your banks forever resides

the beloved Girivardhari (Krishna). □2□

All the women of Braj play with Hari in wondrous Raas pastimes. In Your groves, trees,

and lotus-filled banks lies an ocean of bliss. □3□

The beautiful maidens of Braj, their bodies glistening with water, bathe joyfully — It

appears as though among the stars, the moon shines surrounded by them. □4□

At the feet of my Queen I bow daily and complete all household duties. 'Parmanand Das'

prays — make me Your dasi, and grant me the joy of Your lotus feet. □5□

राग रामकली -

का लंदी क ल- कल्मष हरनी । र व तनया जमअनुजा स्यामा महासुन्दरी गो वंद घरनी ॥१॥

जै जमुने श्रीकृष्णवल्लभा प ततन को पावन भव तरनी । सरनागत को दे त अभयपद जननी तजत जैसे सुत की

करनी ॥२॥

सीतल मन्द सुगंध सुधा न ध धारा ध र वपु उतरी धरनी। 'परमानंद प्रभु' परम पावनी जुग जुग सा ख नगम नत

बरनी ॥ ३॥

Raag Ramkali –

O Kalindi! Destroyer of the sins of Kali age, Daughter of the Sun, sister of Yama, dark in

hue, supremely beautiful, and the beloved of Govind! □1□

O Yamuna, beloved of Shri Krishna, purifier of the fallen, farrier across the ocean of

existence — You grant the fearless state to those who take refuge, just as a mother never

abandons her child. □2□

Cool, gentle, fragrant, and nectar-filled, You descended to earth in a divine stream of

purity. ‘Parmanand Prabhu’ says — You are supremely holy, praised by the Vedas

throughout the ages. □3□

✿✿✿

Paramananddas sang such verses before Shri Acharyaji on the banks of Shriyamunaji. Then Shri Acharyaji, being very pleased, granted Paramananddas the divine darshan of the childhood pastimes (Bal Leela) of Shri Gokul.

Paramananddas beheld these unique and wondrous Bal Leelas in this way — he saw the devotees of Braj drawing water from Shriyamunaji, while Shri Thakurji Himself delighted them through various playful

pastimes and games. Having witnessed these divine Leelas, Paramananddas, overwhelmed with devotion, sang these verses before Shri Acharyaji. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग बलावल -

श्रीयमुनाजल घट भ र ले चली श्रीचन्द्राव ल ना र। मारग में खेलत मले श्रीघनस्याम मुरा र ॥१॥

नैनन सो नैना मले मन रह्यो हैं लुभ्याई। मोहन मूर त मन बसी पग धरयो न जाई ॥। २॥

मन की प्री त प्रगट भई यह पहेली भेट। 'परमानंद' ऐसे मली जैसे गुड में चेंट ॥३॥

Raag Bilawal –

Filling her pot with the waters of Shri Yamuna, Shri Chandravali, the maiden, set forth.

On the path, she met Shri Ghanshyam Murari, playing in joy. □1□

Their eyes met — eyes with eyes — and her heart was instantly captivated.

The charming form of Mohan entered her very being, and her feet could move no more.

□2□

The love of her heart became manifest in that first meeting. ‘Parmanand’ says — their

union was like sugar joined with an ant. □3□

राग सारंग -

लाल नेक टेको मेरी ब हयां। औघट घाट भरयो नहीं लाई रपटत हौ का लंदी प हयां ॥।१।

सुन्दरस्याम कमल दल लोचन दे ख स्वरूप ग्वा ल न अरुझानी। उपजी प्री त काम अंतरग त तब नागर नागरी

पहचानी ॥२॥

हँ स ब्रजनाथ गह्यो कर पल्लव जैसे गगरी गरन न पावे। 'परमानंद' ग्वा ल सयानी कमल नैन परसोई भावे ॥३॥

Raag Sarang –

O dear Lal! Hold my arm firmly — The path by the riverbank is steep, and I am slipping

by the wheels of Kalindi. □1□

The beautiful Shyam, with lotus-petal eyes, beheld the cowherd maiden’s form.

Love arose deep within — at that moment, the hero and heroine recognized one

another. □2□

Smiling, the Lord of Braj grasped her tender hand — Just as a pot filled with water would

never spill when held steady. ‘Parmanand’ says — the wise cowherd girl delights in the

touch of His lotus eyes. 3

✿✿✿

After that, Paramananddas composed many verses describing the childhood pastimes (Bal Leelas) of Shri Gokul. Through those verses, the divine form and true essence of Shri Gokul became clearly understood. That verse was —

✿✿✿

रागकान्हरो -

गाव त गोपी मधु मृदुबानी। जाके भवन बसत त्रभुवनप त राजा नन्द जसोदा रानी ॥१॥

गावत वेद भारती गाव त नारदा द मु न ज्ञानी ॥२॥

गावत चतुरानन जग नायक गावत सेस सहस्र मुखरास । मन क्रम बचन प्री त पद अंबुज अब गावत ´परमानंददास'

॥३॥

Raag Kanharo –

The Gopis sing in sweet, gentle voices — In whose house resides the Lord of the three

worlds, King Nanda and Queen Yashoda. 1

The Vedas sing, Saraswati sings, And Narad and other wise sages also sing His glory. 2

Brahma, the creator, sings of the Lord of the universe, And Shesh, with his thousand

mouths, constantly sings His praise. With mind, action, and speech devoted to the love of

His lotus feet, ‘Parmanand Das’ too now sings of Him. 3

राग कान्हरो -

रानी जसुम त गृह आव त गोपीजन। वासर ताप नवारन कारन बारंबार कमल मुख नरखन ॥१॥

चाहत पक र देहरी उल्लंघन कल क कल क हुलसत मन ह मन । राई लौंन उता र दुहूँकर वार फे र डार त तन मन

धन॥। २॥

ले त उठाय चांप त हयो भ र प्रेम ववस लागे दृग ढरकन। चली ले पलना पोढावन को अरकसाय पोढे सुन्दरघन

॥३॥

दे त असीस सकल गोपीजन चरजीयो जोलों गङ्ग यमुन। ´परमानंददास' कौ ठाकुर भक्तवच्छल भक्तन मनरंजन

॥४॥

Raag Kanharo –

Queen Yashoda returns home, and the Gopis come with her, To see again and again the

lotus-like face of her child, Their hearts cooled from the day’s heat. 1

Eagerly they wish to cross the threshold, Their hearts filled with joy and delight,

laughing softly. Yashoda removes the evil eye from both mother and son,

Waving her hand and offering her mind, body, and wealth to them. 2

Lifting the child in her arms, Overwhelmed with love, her heart throbs with emotion.

She goes to lay the beautiful dark One in His cradle, Her eyes resting upon Him tenderly.

3

All the Gopis offer their blessings — “May He live forever, as long as the Ganga and

Yamuna flow.” ‘Parmanand Das’ says — his Thakur, the beloved of devotees,

Is the one who brings joy to their hearts. □4□

राग हमीर –

ग रधर सब ही अङ्ग कौ बांकौ। बांकी चाल चलत गोकुल में छेल छबीलो कहां कौ ॥ १॥

बांकी भोह चरन ग त बांकी बांकौ हदयो है ताकौ । 'परमानंददास' कौ ठाकुर कयो खौर ब्रज सांकौ ॥२॥

Raag Hameer –

Giridhar, beautiful in every limb, With His graceful gait in Gokul, who can compare to His

charm and playfulness? □1□

His arched brows are graceful, His steps are graceful, Grace itself fills His heart.

‘Parmanand Das’s’ Thakur has made all of Braj radiant with His graceful beauty. □2□

✿✿✿

In this way, Paramananddas sang many kirtans. After having the divine darshan of Shri Gokul, Paramananddas developed deep attachment and love for Shri Gokul. Then, before Shri Acharyaji, he sang such verses of prayer, expressing— “May I be kept in Shri Gokul near Your lotus feet, so that I may daily have the darshan of Shri Thakurji and experience all the divine Leelas.”

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

यह मांगों जसोदानन्दन। चरनकमल मेरो मन मधुकर यह छ ब नैनन पाॐ दरसन ॥ १॥

चरनकमल की सेवा दीजे दोऊ तन राजत बजुलता घन । नंदनंदन वृषभाननिन्दनी मेरे सवसु प्रानजीवन घन ॥ २॥

ब्रज ब सवो जमुनाजल अ चवौ श्रीवल्लभ कौ दास यह पन। महाप्रसाद पाऊँ ह रगुन गाऊँ 'परमानन्ददास' दासी जन

॥३॥

Raag Sarang –

This I ask of You, O son of Yashoda! May my mind be like a bee at Your lotus feet,

And may my eyes behold this beautiful vision of Yours. □1□

Grant me the service of Your lotus feet — Both bodies shine like lightning and clouds

together. O Nandanandan and O daughter of Vrishabhanu, You are my all — my wealth,

my very life, O dark One! □2□

May I dwell in Braj and drink the waters of Yamuna, For this is the vow of the sevak of

Shri Vallabh. May I receive Mahaprasad and sing the glories of Hari — ‘Parmanand Das’

prays as Your humble servant. □3□

राग कान्हरो -

यह मौगों संकष न बीर । चरनकमल अनुराग नरन्तर भावत हैं भक्तन की भीर ॥ १॥

संग देहो तो ह रभक्तन कौ बास वृन्दाबन जमुना तीर। श्रवण देह तो कृष्णकथारस ध्यान देउ तो स्याम सरीर ॥ २ ॥

मनकामना सकल प रपूरन मजन बमल का लंदी नीर। 'परमानंददास' कौ ठाकुर गोकुल नायक सब व ध धीर ॥ ३

□

Raag Kanharo –

This I ask, O heroic Sankarshan! May constant love for Your lotus feet dwell within me,

As the crowd of devotees surrounds You in devotion. □1□

Grant me the company of Hari's devotees, And residence by the Yamuna's shore in

Vrindavan. Grant my ears the nectar of Krishna's stories, And my meditation the vision

of Shyam's form. □2□

May all the desires of my heart be fulfilled, Through bathing in the pure waters of

Kalindi. 'Parmanand Das's' Thakur — the Lord of Gokul — Is patient, gentle, and perfect

in every way. □3□

✿✿✿

Hearing such devotional kirtans of prayer sung by Paramananddas, Shri Acharyaji became very pleased with him.

Prasang 3 – Paramananddas's Kirtan Before Shri Govardhannathji

After that, Shri Acharyaji, along with Paramananddas and the entire assembly of Vaishnavas, departed from Shri Gokul and proceeded toward Shri Govardhan. At the time of the Utthapan festival, Shri Acharyaji arrived at Shri Giriraj. There, He bathed and then ascended Shri Giriraj to the temple of Shri Govardhannathji.

Paramananddas also bathed, offered full sashtang dandvat pranam to Shri Giriraj, and then went up the mountain to the temple to have the darshan of Utthapan. While beholding the divine form of Shri Govardhannathji, Paramananddas became deeply absorbed and attached in devotion. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Paramananddas through His divine lips, "Paramananddas! Sing some kirtans of the Lord's divine Leelas before Shri Govardhannathji."

Paramananddas reflected within himself, thinking, "What can I sing? My tongue is only one, but the form of Shri Govardhannathji is infinite, and His Leelas too are infinite. Whatever aspect I try to recall, my mind becomes overwhelmed and unsteady.

But since it is Shri Acharyaji's command, I must sing something. Let me sing a verse that begins with the Avatara-Leela, then continues

with the Kunj-Leela, then offers praise to the Lord's lotus feet, then describes His divine form, and finally glorifies His Leelas along with their greatness." Then Paramananddas sang such a verse. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग बलावल –

मोहन नन्दराइ कुमार। प्रकट ब्रह्म नकुंज नायक भक्त हत अवतार ॥१॥

प्रथम चरन सरोज वन्दों स्यामघन गोपाल । मकर कुण्डल गंड मं डत चारु नैन बसाल ॥२॥

बलराम स हत वनोद लीला सेस सङ्कर हेत । 'दास परमानंद प्रभु´ ह र नगम बोलत ने त ॥३॥

Raag Bilawal –

Mohan, the son of Nandarai, Is the manifest Brahman, the Lord of the groves, who has

incarnated for the welfare of His devotees. □1□

First, I bow to the lotus feet of the dark cloud–complexioned Gopal, Whose cheeks are

adorned with jeweled makara-shaped earrings, and whose eyes are broad and beautiful.

□2□

Together with Balaram, He performs delightful pastimes — Even Shesh and Shankar

cannot comprehend their depth. 'Sevak Parmanand Prabhu' says — the Vedas

themselves declare, "Neti, neti" (He is beyond description). □3□

✿✿✿

After singing that verse of prayer, Paramananddas then sang verses expressing deep attachment and loving devotion.

✿✿✿

राग आसावरी -

माई मेरो माधौं सों मन मान्यो। अपनो मन और वा ढोटा कौ एक मेक क र सान्यो ॥ १॥

लोक वेद की का न तजी मैं न्यो त आपुने आन्यो । एकगो वंदचन्द के कारन र सबन सो ठान्यो ॥ २॥

अब क्यों भन्न हो ह मेरी सजनी दूध मल्यौ ज्यों पान्यौ। 'परमानंद' मले हैं ग रधर है पहलो पहचान्यौ ॥३॥

Raag Asavari –

O mother, my mind is now pleased with Madhav alone. I have joined my own heart and

His — mixing both into one. □1□

I have abandoned the opinions of the world and of the Vedas, And have brought myself

under His invitation alone. For the sake of Govind Chand, I have resolved to renounce all

others. □2□

Now how could I ever be separate, my dear friend, Just as milk, once mixed with water,

cannot be parted again. ‘Parmanand’ says — I have met Giridhar; it is He whom I

recognized first. □3□

राग गोरी -

मैं अपनो मन ह र सो जोरयो । ह र सो जो र सबन सो तोरयो ॥।१॥

आगे पाछे कौ सोच मटयो अब बाट माँझ मटुका फोरचो । कहनो होइ सो कहो सखीरी कहा भयो काहू मुख मोरयो

॥२॥

नवल लाल ग रधर पया संग प्रेम रंग में यह तन बोय। 'परमानंदप्रभु’ लोक हँसन दै व ध-नषेध कौ नांतौ तोरयो

॥३॥

Raag Gauri –

I have bound my heart with Hari, And binding it to Him, I have cut off all ties with

others. □1□

All worries of past and future are gone — Now, even if the pot breaks in the middle of the

road, what is there to lose? Say whatever you wish, O friend — How could I ever turn my

face away from Him? □2□

I have sown this body in the color of love with my beloved Giridhar. ‘Parmanand Prabhu’ says — let the world laugh if it wishes, I have broken all bonds of rules and prohibitions.

□3□

राग कान्हरो -

तहारी बात मो ह भाव त लाल । बार बार जसोम त के भवन में यह सुनन हो आवात जा त ॥ १॥

पार परोसी अनख करत हैं और कछुक लगाव त लाल । ताकी सा ख बधाता जाने िज ह लालच उ ठ धाव त लाल

॥२॥

द धकौ मथन अरु गृह कौ कारज तहारे प्रेम बसशव त लाल । 'परमानंद प्रभु' कुंवर भांमतो तुम देखे सचु पाव त

लाल ॥।३॥

Raag Kanharo –

O Lal, Your words are dear to me. Again and again I hear them, coming and going to

Yashoda’s house. □1□

The neighboring women tease and jest, and Lal sometimes joins in their playful

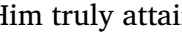
quarrels. The Creator Himself knows this truth — For out of eagerness, Lal rushes

toward them in joy. □2□

While churning curd or doing household tasks, Your love, O Lal, flows through

everything. ‘Parmanand Prabhu’ says — when the young prince wanders about,

Whoever beholds Him truly attains truth itself. ❑3❑



After that, Shri Acharyaji performed the Sevaarati (ceremonial evening worship) of Shri Govardhannathji. At that time, Paramananddas sang this verse. That verse was —

राग केदारो -

पौदे रंगमहल गो वंद। रा धका संग सरद रजनी उ दत पूरनचंद ॥।१॥

व वध ब चत्र चत्र चत्रत कोक को टक फंद। नर ख नर ख बलास बलसत दंप त रसकंद ॥२॥

मलयचंदन अंग लेपन परस्पर आनंद। कुसुम बंजना ब्यार ढोरे सजनी 'परमानंद ॥३॥

Raag Kedaro –

The palace is adorned and radiant with colors — Govind rest there,

Along with Radhika, on the autumn night lit by the full moon. ❑1❑

The walls are painted with countless beautiful designs and colorful patterns,

As the divine couple, the very essence of bliss, gaze upon each other and rejoice in

playful delight. ❑2❑

Their bodies are anointed with sandal paste from the Malaya mountain, and they enjoy

together in joy. The gentle breeze carries the fragrance of flowers — so describes

‘Parmanand’. ❑3❑

✿✿✿

In this way, Paramananddasji sang many such verses. Hearing them, Shri Acharyaji became very pleased. After that, Shri Acharyaji laid Shri Govardhannathji down to rest and then descended the mountain. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Ramdas Bhitariya, “Send prasadi dadh (blessed curd) to Paramananddas.” But Ramdas instead sent prasadi dudh (blessed milk).

When Paramananddas began to drink that prasadi milk, he found it to be hot, so he let it cool slightly and then drank it. Afterward, Paramananddas came to Shri Acharyaji, offered dandvat pranam, and sat down. Then Shri Acharyaji asked him, “Paramananddas! The Mahaprasadi milk that you drank — how was it?”

Paramananddas replied, “Maharaj! The milk was hot.” Then Shri Acharyaji called all the bhitariya (inner sevaks) and asked, “Why do you offer the milk while it is hot? It should be offered when it is pleasantly warm and suitable.” All the inner sevaks replied, “Maharaj! From now onward, we will first let the milk cool slightly and offer it as siro (sweetened and cooled milk).”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shri Acharyaji Himself arranged to have prasadi milk given to Paramananddas because milk is especially dear to Shri Thakurji. Through this act, He granted Paramananddas the experience of the Nikunj-Leela rasa (the divine play within the bowers).

Moreover, Shri Thakurji has said that when Vaishnavas appreciate and praise an offering, it signifies that the Lord has relished it fully and found it pleasing. Therefore, the milk was sent with that divine purpose. After Paramananddas drank the milk — nectar from the Lord’s own lips — he remained throughout the night immersed in the experience of Leela-rasa. Then, being absorbed in the divine night pastimes, he sang these verses. That verse was —

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राग कान्हरो -

आनंद संधुबढयो ह रतन में। श्रीराधा पूरन स स मुख नरखत उम ग चल्यो ब्रज वृन्दाबन में ॥१॥

इत रोक्यो यमुना उत गोपी कछु इक फैल परयो त्रभुवन में। ना परस्यो कमठ अरू ज्ञानी अट क रहयो र सकन के

मन में ॥२॥

मंद मंद अवगाहत बुद् धबल भक्त हेत लीला छन छन में। कछु एक लहयो नंदसुवन कृपातें सो दे खयत 'परमानंद'

जन में ॥३॥

Raag Kanharo –

The ocean of bliss overflowed within Hari. Seeing the full-moon face of Shri Radha, He

rose joyfully and went into Braj's Vrindavan. □1□

Here stood Yamuna, there the Gopis, and something of Him spread throughout the three

worlds. Neither the learned nor the ascetic could grasp Him — He remained lodged in

the hearts of the rasiks. □2□

Gently and playfully, He entered the waters, Performing divine pastimes every moment for the sake of His devotees. By the grace of the son of Nanda, one rare soul among men

attained Him — So says 'Parmanand'. □3□

राग कान्हरो -

पय मुख देखत ही र हये। नैनन को सुख कहत न आवे जा कारन दुःख सब ह स हए ॥।१॥

सुनो गोपाललाल पौइ लागों भली पोच ले ब हए। हों आसक्त भई या रूप ह बड़े भा ग तें ल हए ॥२॥

तुम बहुनायक चतुर सरोम न मेरी बॉह दृढ़ ग हए। 'परमानंदस्वामी' मनमोहन तुम ह में नरब हए ॥ ३॥

Raag Kanharo –

One could keep gazing endlessly at the beloved's face — The joy to the eyes cannot be

expressed, And for the sake of that joy, one bears all sorrows. □1□

Listen, O Gopal Lal, I bow at Your feet; Touch me kindly and bless me. I have become

deeply attached to Your form, Which can be obtained only through

great fortune. □2□

You are the supreme and most skillful among all heroes; Hold my arm firmly in Your

grasp. ‘Parmanand Swami’ says — O Manmohan, Let my heart abide forever in You. □3□

राग गौरी -

कौ रस गो पन लीनो घूंट। मदन गोपाल नकट कर पाए प्रेम काम की लूंट ॥१॥

नर ख रूप नंदनंदन कौ लोकलाज गई छू ट। ´परमानंद' वेद सागर की मयादा गई तू ट ॥२॥

Raag Gauri –

What sweetness the Gopis drank in a single sip! Madan Gopal, being near them, looted

their love and passion. □1□

Beholding the form of Nandanandan, all worldly shame vanished. ‘Parmanand’ says —

even the boundaries set by the Vedas and scriptures were broken. □2□

राग गौरी -

यातें माई भवन छां ड बन जैये। आं ख-रस कानरस बातरस सब रस नंदनंदन पें पैये ॥ १॥

कर पल्लव ग ह कंठ बाहु ध र संग मले गुन गैये । रास बलास वनोद अनुपम माधौ के मन भैये ॥। २॥

यह सुख सखी कहत ना ह आवे देखत दुःख बसरैये। 'परमानंदस्वामी' को संगम भाग्य बड़े तें पैये ॥३॥

Raag Gauri –

Therefore, O mother, let us leave home and go to the forest! For all the sweetness of eyes,

ears, and speech Is found only in Nandanandan. □1□

Holding His tender hands and embracing His neck, They sing together of His virtues.

Incomparable are the playful Raas pastimes of Madhav, which delight

His mind. □2□

This happiness, O friend, cannot be described — Even the sight of Him makes one forget

all sorrow. ‘Parmanand Swami’ says — such a meeting with the Lord comes only

through great fortune. □3□

राग हमीर-

अमृत नचोय कयो इकठौर। तेरो बदन सुधा र सुधा न ध तब तें बधना र च न और ॥१॥

सु न राधे उपमा कहा दीजे स्याम मनोहर भए हैं चकोर। सादर पान करत तुव आनन तृ षत काम बस नंद कसोर ॥

२॥

कौन कौन अंग करोरी नरूपन नवगुन सील रूप की रा स। 'परमानंद प्रभु' को चत्त चोरयो लोचन बँधे प्रेम की प्यास

॥३॥

Raag Hameer –

The nectar of all sweetness was gathered in one place — After refining Your face, O

ocean of nectar, Brahma could create nothing more. □1□

Hearing this, Radha asked — “To what can He be compared?” For Shyam Manohar has

become like the moon-bird (chakor), eager to drink the nectar of Your face.

The son of Nanda, overcome with love, drinks deeply of Your beauty. □2□

Which limb, which quality, which virtue could one describe — All are countless treasures

of beauty and grace. ‘Parmanand Prabhu’s’ heart has been stolen by Him, Bound by the

thirst of divine love through the eyes. □3□

राग बहागरो -

यह तन नवल कुंवर परवारों। नव नकुंज में गौरस्याम तन वारंवार नहारों ॥१॥

इतनी टहल कृपा क र दीजे संग म ल जीव उधारों। 'परमानंदस्वामी' के मले बनु और काज सब बारों ॥२॥

Raag Bihagro –

This body I offer to the youthful prince! In the fresh grove, I behold again and again

The fair and dark forms together. □1□

Grant me this much grace and favor — Let me join You and attain deliverance.

Without meeting 'Parmanand Swami's' Lord, All other deeds are worthless. □2□

✿✿✿

In this way, Paramananddas experienced the divine Leela throughout the entire night and sang many kirtans. After that, when morning came, Shri Acharyaji bathed and ascended the mountain. There, He awakened Shri Govardhannathji. At that time, Paramananddas sang this verse. That verse was —

✿✿✿

रागरामकली -

जागो गोपाललाल देखो मुख तेरो। पाछें गृहकाज करो नत्य नेम मेरो ॥१॥

बगसत नसा अरुन दसा उ दत भयो भान । गुंजत अली पंकज बन जा गए भगवान ॥ २॥

द्वारे ठाढ़े बंदीजन करत हैं उच्चार । बंस प्रसंस गावत है ह र – लीला अवतार ॥३॥

'परमानंदस्वामी´ गोपाल जगत मंगल रूप। वेद पुरान पढत ज्ञान म हमा अनूप ॥४॥

Raag Ramkali –

Awake, O Gopal Lal, behold Your face! After that, attend to Your daily household duties, as

is my vow each day. □1□

The night has bloomed, the red dawn has risen, and the sun has appeared. The bees hum

among the lotuses — arise, O Lord! □2□

At the doorway stand the attendants, reciting praises aloud. They sing songs of the flute

and glorify Hari's divine incarnations. □3□

'Parmanand Swami's' Gopal is the very embodiment of auspiciousness in the world. His

glory, praised in the Vedas and Puranas, is beyond comprehension. □4□

राग रामकली -

लाल को मुख देखन हो आई । किाल्ह मुख दे ख गई द ध बेचन जात ही गयो है बकाई ॥१॥

दनतें दूनो लाभ भयो घर काजर ब छया जाई। आई हो धाय थंभाय साथकीन मोहन देहु जगाई ॥ २॥

सु न त्रय बचन वे हैं स बैठे नाग र नकट बुलाई। ´परमानंद' सया नग्वा लन सेन संकेत बताई ॥। ३॥

Raag Ramkali –

I came to see the face of my dear Lal. Yesterday I saw his face when I went to sell curd — I

landed selling a lot of it □1□

From that day, my earnings have doubled — the calf sold at home! I rushed back home in

excitement, and begged Mohan, "Wake up, my dear!" □2□

Hearing the woman's words, He smiled, Called the maiden near, And 'Parmanand' says

— the clever cowherd girl Hinted at their secret sign of love. □3□

राग रामकली -

ग्वा लन पछवारे व्ह बोल सुनायो। कमलनैन प्यारो करत कलेऊ कोर न मुख लो आयो ॥ १॥

अरी मैया एक बन ब्याई गया बछरा उहॉई बसायो । मुरली न लीनी लकु टया न लीनी अरबराय कोऊ सखा न बुलायो

॥२॥

चकृत भई नंद जूकी रानी सत्य आइ कैधों सुपनो पायो। फूले अंगन माय र सकवर त्रभुवनराय सर- छत्र जु छायो ॥

३॥

बैठे जाइ नकुंज सदन में व वध भाँ त कयो मन भायो। 'परमानंद' सयानीग्वा लन उल ट अंक ग रधर पय पायो

॥४॥

Raag Ramkali –

A cowherd girl spoke from behind, “O lotus-eyed beloved! Why are you eating alone

without calling anyone?” □1□

“O mother,” He said, “a calf from another forest has gone astray there, So I went and

settled it. I took neither flute nor stick, nor did I call any of my companions.” □2□

Queen Yashoda was astonished, realizing that her dream had come true! The courtyard filled with radiance, and over her son, the Lord of the three worlds, A divine umbrella of

glory spread. □3□

Later, she went to the grove-palace and made every arrangement delightful to the heart.

‘Parmanand’ says — the clever cowherd maiden At last found her beloved Giridhar in her

embrace. □4□

✿✿✿

In this way, Paramananddas sang many such verses. After that, Shri Acharyaji granted Paramananddas the seva of singing kirtans for Shri Govardhannathji. From then on, Paramananddas would compose new

verses every day and sing them before Shri Nathji.

Prasang 4 – The Queen's Darshan of Shri Nathji

One day, a certain king came to Braj on pilgrimage along with his queen. That king was a sevak of Shri Acharyaji. After having the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji, the king returned to his camp and said to his queen, "The darshan of Shri Govardhannathji is exceedingly beautiful. You too should go up to Giriraj and have His darshan." Then the queen said to the king, "If it can be arranged that I may have darshan from behind a veil, according to our custom, then I shall go."

The king replied, "These are the Lords of Braj — for the darshan of Shri Thakurji, what need is there for a veil? The Lord of Braj does not keep Himself hidden from anyone." In this manner, the king tried hard to persuade the queen, but she would not agree. Then the king humbly appealed to Shri Acharyaji, saying, "Maharaj! I have tried greatly to explain to the queen, but she insists that she wishes to have darshan from behind a veil."

Then Shri Acharyaji said, "Bring her in with the veil. We shall arrange for her to have the very first darshan." So the queen came in behind the curtain and began to have darshan of Shri Nathji. Then Shri Nathji, in his form as Bhaktodwarak (the One who draws His devotees to Himself), rose up from His throne, walked to the door of the temple, and flung open the door panels with his own hands. The crowd outside pressed forward, and the rush of people fell upon the queen. At that moment, all the garments upon her body slipped away.

The queen became utterly embarrassed and ashamed. When she returned to the tent, she recounted everything that had happened to the king. Then the king said to her, "I had told you beforehand — Shri Nathji is the Lord of Braj. He hides Himself from no one and keeps no one veiled before Him."

At that very time, Paramananddas was singing a kirtan, and one line of that kirtan precisely described the event that had just occurred. That verse was —

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'कौन यह खे लवे की बा न। मदन गोपाललाल काहू की राखत नां हन का न. ॥'

Who plays in these ways? Madan Gopal Lal does not keep anyone's

words in His ears.

Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji gently corrected Paramananddas, saying,

“Do not speak in that way — instead, say it like this, that —”

'भली यह खे लवे की बानी।'

Good are these playful ways.

✿✿✿

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): What does this signify? At this time, Paramananddas had only just been given the position of das (sevak). He was to remain in the mood of servitude (das-bhav). When he speaks in that humble state, the Lord bestows His grace upon him. Only when the sakhya-bhav (mood of friendship) becomes firmly established does one converse with the Lord on equal terms. Without that qualification, a higher tone of speech or emotion is not appropriate — one who attempts it falls from his position.

Therefore, when Shri Thakurji bestows the gift of simple and sincere devotion, only then such expressions are proper. Another meaning is this — Shri Acharyaji Himself showed that His greatest affection rested in Shri Govardhannathji. Out of that supreme love, He demonstrated that one who truly loves does not speak to his beloved in harshness. If an action done by a beloved is not fitting, the affectionate one still says, “You have done well.” Such is the way of divine love.

Therefore, Shri Acharyaji gently admonished Paramananddas, saying, “Do not speak in that tone, saying ‘What kind of speech is this for play?’ One should never speak thus.” He said, “Those who may rightly be restrained are the devotees of Braj — they may speak however they wish, for their intimacy is natural. But you should speak in a way that expresses affection — say instead, ‘How sweetly You play and speak!’”

Then Paramananddas sang such a verse accordingly. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

भली यह खे लवे की बा न । मदनगुपाललाल काहू की राखत नाहीन का न ॥ १॥

अपने हाथ ले देत बनचरन ह दूध भात घृत सा न । सो बरजों तो आंख दखावे पर घर कूदन-दा न

॥२ ॥

सुन र जसोदा सुत के करतब यह ले माट मथा न । फो ड़ ढो र द ध डा र अिजर में कौन सहे नत हा न ॥३॥

ठाढी हँस त नंदजूकी रा न मूं द कमल मुख पा न । 'परमानंददास' इह जाने बा ल बू झ घो आ न ॥४॥

Raag Sarang –

Good are these playful ways! Madan Gopal Lal does not keep anyone's words in His ears.

□1□

With His own hands, He takes and gives to the cowherd women rice mixed with milk

and ghee. If they scold Him, He only shows His eyes at them — and then leaps into their

houses to steal again! □2□

Hearing these deeds of her son, Yashoda smiles, as he churns the very mud itself,

Breaking the pots, spilling the curd in the courtyard — Who could bear such daily

mischief? □3□

Queen Yashoda stands laughing, covering her lotus face with her hands. ‘Parmanand

Das’ understands this — It is all the innocent play of the divine child! □4□

✿✿✿

Hearing that verse, Shri Acharyaji became very pleased.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this way, Paramananddas composed and sang thousands upon thousands of kirtans. In his verses, the moods of the Lord’s childhood pastimes (Bal Leela bhav) and their hidden divine meanings (rahasya) shine through.

Whatever divine Leela Paramananddas directly experienced within his heart, of that very Leela he composed and sang verses. Shri Acharyaji Himself had bestowed upon Paramananddas the gift of Bal Leela rasa within his heart, and therefore even in the profound and subtle verses of Paramananddas, the essence of the Bal Leela naturally reveals itself.

Prasang 5 – The Visit of the Bhagavadiya Vaishnavas

One day, all the Bhagavadiya Vaishnavas — Surdasji, Kumbhandasji, Ramdas, and others together came to visit the place where Paramananddas was residing. Seeing all these blessed devotees arrive at his home, Paramananddas became overjoyed in his heart, thinking, “Today, great fortune has come to me! These divine devotees have,

out of grace, come to my home. What extraordinary and blessed souls they are!" He thought, "These devotees are the very forms of Shri Govardhannathji Himself. Therefore, today Shri Govardhannathji has shown immense grace upon me."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): What does this mean? It means that Shri Thakurji Himself, assuming many forms, has come to my home. Since Shri Thakurji resides within the hearts of all Bhagavadiya Vaishnavas, it is my great fortune that they have graced me by coming here. Now I have attained the supreme fulfillment of life, for all these divine devotees have showered their mercy upon me.

Therefore, first I must offer myself completely to these Bhagavadiya Vaishnavas. But what thing in this world could be worthy enough to offer myself fully at their feet? Then, together with the Bhagavadiya Vaishnavas, Paramananddas seated them all upon high seats with great honor and sang this verse. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग बहागये -

आए मेरे नन्दनन्दन के प्यारे। माला तलक मनोहर बानो त्रभुवन के उिजयारे ॥१॥

प्रेम स हत उर बसत नरन्तर नेक हू टरत न टारे। हदै कमल के मध्य बराजत श्रीबजराज दुलारे ॥ २॥

कहा जानों कौन पुन्य उदय भयो मेरे घर जु पधारे, "परमानंद" करत न्योछाव र वा र वा र बहो वारे ॥३॥

Raag Bihagye –

Has come the beloved of my Nandanandan! Adorned with garland and tilak, so beautiful

in form, The one who illumines all the three worlds. □1□

With love He dwells constantly within my heart, Never turning away, not even for a

moment. In the center of the lotus of my heart sits The darling son of the King of Braj.

□2□

How could I know what great fortune has arisen, That He has come to my home!

‘Parmanand’ offers himself in devotion — Again and again, he bows and surrenders.

□3□

✿✿✿

After that, Paramananddas sang another verse. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग बहागरो -

ह रजन स छनक जो होई। करें कृपा ग रधरन जीव पर पातक रहे न कोई ॥१॥

सकल कुतक वासना नासे ह र सुमरे सुमरावे। जड़ व्हे चतुर मंद बुद् ध नरमल मनमोहन मन भावे ॥२॥

माया काल कछू नहीं व्यापे जो ह रजन को जाने। 'परमानंद' यही मन नश्चय ह रजन गुन ह बखाने ॥३॥

Raag Bihagro - If even for a moment one becomes a devotee of Hari, then by Giridhar’s grace, no sin can

remain upon that soul. □1□

All false arguments and worldly desires are destroyed by remembering and making

others remember Hari. The dull become wise, the slow-minded become pure,

And their hearts are delighted by Manmohan. □2□

Neither Maya nor Time can touch the one who truly knows the devotee of Hari.

‘Parmanand’ says — this is the firm conviction of my heart, That only the virtues of

Hari’s devotees are to be spoken. □3□

✿✿✿

In this way, Paramananddas sang those verses. Hearing them, all the Bhagavadiya Vaishnavas became very pleased with him. Then Paramananddas humbly requested all the Vaishnavas, “Today, you

have kindly come to my home — please give me some command or instruction.” Then Ramdasji asked, “Paramananddas! In Braj, all devotees — Nandarayaji, the Gopis, the cowherd boys, and all the Braj devotees — have deep love for the Lord. Among them, whose love is the greatest?”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why did he ask this? Because Paramananddas had great attachment to the Lord’s childhood pastimes (Bal Leela), and since he was a blessed devotee and recipient of divine grace, Ramdasji asked this question to clear any doubt.

The meaning is this — according to Shri Acharyaji’s inner intention, the Gopis’ love is the highest. But Paramananddas had described many pastimes of Nand’s household and of the Lord’s childhood. Therefore, Ramdasji wished to see whether Paramananddas truly understood the inner intention of Shri Acharyaji’s heart — hence this question served as a test. At that moment, Paramananddas sang this verse. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग नायकी -

गोपी प्रेमकी ध्वजा। िजन गोपाल कयो बस अपने उर ध र स्याम भुजा ॥१॥

सुक मु न व्यास प्रसंसा कीनी उद्धव संत सराही। भू र भा ग गोकुल की व नता अ त पू नत जगमहीं ॥ २॥

कहा भयो जु वप्रकुल जन्मयो जो ह र सेवा नाहीं। सोई पू नत दास 'परमानंद' जो ह र सन्मुख जाहीं ॥३॥

Raag Nayaki –

The Gopis’ love is the banner of devotion — By it, they have bound Gopal, holding

Shyam within their hearts and His arms around them. □1□

Sage Shuk, Vyasa, and the saints like Uddhav have all praised them, for the women of

Gokul are greatly fortunate and supremely holy in all the world. □2□

What is the value of birth in a family of Brahmins, If there is no service of Hari? That one

alone is pure, says ‘Parmanand Das’, Who goes to stand before Hari

with devotion. 3

राग कान्हरो -

ब्रजजन सम घर पर कोउ नाहीं। िजन सब तन मन ह र अपन क र मोहन धरो उर मांहीं ॥१॥

सदा स डोलत मन मोहन गोपी ध र उर ध्यान। गोपी गोपी रटत नरन्तर भू ल गये सब ज्ञान ॥२॥

जा गोपी की पदरज उद्धव ब्रह्मा दक सब जाचें। ता गोपी गृह माखन काजें सब दन ग रधर नाचे ॥ ३॥

गोपीजन मैं कौन बताऊँ ह र हू पार न पावे। तो हों मन्द बुद् ध कहा जानों 'परमानंद' गुन गावें ॥ ४॥

Raag Kanharo –

There are no households like those of the people of Braj, Who have offered their entire

bodies and minds to Hari, and hold Mohan close within their hearts. 1

Their minds sway with love for Mohan; The Gopis hold His form in their hearts in

constant meditation. Forever repeating “Gopi, Gopi,” they have forgotten all other

knowledge. 2

The dust of those Gopis’ feet is sought by Uddhav, Brahma, and all the great gods, and in

those Gopis’ homes, for the sake of butter, Giridhar Himself dances every day. 3

How can I describe the glory of the Gopis? Even Hari Himself cannot reach its end.

Then how could I, dull-minded as I am, know it? ‘Parmanand’ can only sing their

virtues. 4

✿✿✿

Hearing that verse sung by Paramananddas, all the Vaishnavas said,

“Paramananddas! You are truly blessed!” In this way, all the Vaishnavas became very pleased and praised Paramananddas greatly. Afterward, they took their leave and returned to their homes. Thereafter, Paramananddas continued for many days to perform the seva of singing kirtans before Shri Govardhannathji.

Prasang 6 – Paramananddas Receives a Kirtan from Shri

Gusainji

After some time, one day Paramananddas came from Gopalpur to Shri Gokul to have the darshan of Shri Gusainji and Shri Navneetpriyaji. After having darshan, he stayed there that night. The next morning, Shri Gusainji, after taking His bath, went to the temple of Shri Navneetpriyaji. Then He called for Paramananddas.

Paramananddas came forward, offered dandvat pranam, and stood humbly before Him. Then Shri Gusainji said to Paramananddas, “All the divine Leelas of Shri Thakurji in Braj are most dear to Him. One who constantly sings the Braj Leelas of Shri Thakurji — even in all time — cannot reach their limit. Why? Because even one Leela cannot be sung to its end; how, then, can all Leelas be expressed?

But I shall now compose one kirtan for you — within it contains the full essence and experience of all the Braj Leelas. You should sing this kirtan regularly from now on.” Then Paramananddas said, “Maharaj! Please graciously reveal that verse to me.” Since Shri Gusainji was one who followed the proper path (margacharya), He did not compose in the common tongue (bhasha), but instead sang the kirtan in Sanskrit. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग रागकली -

मंगल मंगलं ब्रजभु व मंगलम ्। मङ्गल मल श्रीनंदयसोदा नामसुकीतनमेतदु चरोत्संगसुला लतपा लतरूपम्॥१॥

!श्रीश्रीकृष्ण इ त श्रु तसारं नाम स्वातजनाशयतापापह म त मंगलरावम ्। ब्रजसुन्दरीवयस्यसुर भवृन्द

मृगीगण नरूपमभावा मंगलसीधुचया ॥२॥

मंगलभीषत ्ि◌ंस्मतयुतमीक्षण - भाषणमुन्नतनासापुटगतमुक्ताफल चलनम ् ॥

कोमलचलदंगु लदल संगत

वेणु ननाद वमो टतवृन्दावनभु वजाताः ॥३॥

मंगलम खलं गोपी शतु र तमंथरग त बभ्रम मो हतरासिस्थतगानम ्। त्वं जय सततं श्रीगोवद्धनधर पालय

नजदासान ॥४॥

Raag Raagkali –

Auspicious, auspicious is the land of Braj; all is auspicious. Auspicious is the melodious

chanting of the names of Shri Nanda and Yashoda, in whose tender laps the beautiful

form of Shri Krishna was long fondled and lovingly cared for. (1)

The words “Shri Shri Krishna” are the very essence of the Vedas; this divine name

destroys the inner sorrow and sins of those devoted to it — it resounds with an

auspicious echo. The fragrance of Braj maidens, the herds of cows, and the deer of the

forest — all are immersed in that blissful nectar of auspiciousness. (2)

Auspicious are His smiling glances and sweet speech, His slightly raised nose adorned

with a moving pearl, His soft fingers gracefully dancing as they play the flute — from

whose notes the land of Vrindavan itself was born in delight. (3)

Auspicious is everything — the divine circle of Gopis enchanted by love, their gentle,

playful steps, and their sweet songs within the Rasa dance. O You, who ever triumph —

Shri Govardhan-dhara! Protect Your sevaks forever. (4)

Then Shri Gusainji Himself sang that verse and made Paramananddas sing it after Him. Paramananddas joyfully sang it, repeating the words “Mangalam, Mangalam.” Then, in that same auspicious mood, Paramananddas composed and sang other verses as well. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग भैरव -

मंगल माधौ नाम उचार । मंगल बदन कमलकर मंगल मंगलजन की सदा सम्हार ॥१॥

खेलत मंगल पूजत मंगल गावत मंगल गीत उदार। मंगल श्रवन कथारस मंगल मंगल तन वसुदेव कुमार ॥२॥

गोकुल मंगल मधुवन मंगल मंगल रु च वृन्दावनचंद। मंगल करन गोवद्धनधारी मंगल भेख जसोदानंद ॥३॥

मंगलधेनु रेनु भुवमंगल मंगल मधुर बजावत वेनु। मंगल गोपवधू प ररंभन मंगल का लंदी पय फेनु ॥४॥

मंगल चरनकमलदल मंगल मंगल कीर त जगत नवास । अनु दन मंगल ध्यान धरत मु न मंगल म त

'परमानंददास' ॥५॥

Raag Bhairav –

Auspicious is the utterance of Madhav’s name. Auspicious is His lotus-like face and His

lotus hands; may the ever-auspicious Lord always protect all who are blessed. (1)

Auspicious is His play, auspicious His worship, auspicious are the noble songs sung in His

praise. Auspicious is the nectar of His stories heard by the ears; auspicious is the divine

body of Vasudev's son. (2)

Auspicious is Gokul, auspicious is Madhuban, and auspicious is the radiant moon of

Vrindavan. Auspicious are the deeds of Govardhan-dhari, and auspicious is the form of

Yashoda's blissful son. (3)

Auspicious is the sacred cow and the dust of the earth; auspicious is the sweet sound of

His flute. Auspicious is the loving embrace of the Gopa maidens, and auspicious is the

foaming water of the Kalindi River. (4)

Auspicious are His lotus feet, and auspicious is His divine glory, the abode of the world.

Day after day, the sages meditate upon His auspicious form, and so does 'Parmananddas'

keep his mind fixed on that blessed Lord. (5)

✿✿✿

Then Paramananddas sang this verse. After that, Shri Gusainji completed the Mangala Bhog offering and performed the Mangala Aarti. At that very time, Paramananddas sang this verse. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग भैरव -

मंगल आरती क र मन मोर । भरम नसा बीती भयो भोर।।१॥

मंगल बाजत झालर ताल । मंगल रूप उठे नंदलाल ॥।२॥

मंगल बाजत बीन मृदंग। मंगल बांसुरी सरस उपंग ॥३॥

मंगल धूपदीप क र जोर मंगल गावत सब म ल कोर ॥४॥

मंगल उदयो मंगल रास। मंगल म त 'परमानंददास' ॥५॥

Raag Bhairav –

Performing the auspicious aarti, my mind is filled with joy. The dark night of illusion has

passed — the bright dawn has arrived. (1)

Auspiciously resound the cymbals and drums, as the beautiful form of Nandlal (Krishna)

awakens in divine splendor. (2)

Auspiciously sound the veena and the mridang, and the flute plays its sweet, melodious

tones. (3)

With incense and lamps offered in devotion, all together sing songs of auspicious praise.

(4)

Auspicious has arisen the divine dance and joy; auspicious is the mind of

‘Parmananddas.’ (5)

✿✿✿

In this way, following the Mangalam Mangalam composition created by Shri Gusainji, Paramananddas sang many kirtans. He regularly sang the verse Mangalam Mangalam composed by Shri Gusainji every day.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Within this kirtan lies the entirety of the Braj Leela — by singing it daily before Shri Thakurji, one experiences the essence of all the Lord’s divine pastimes of Braj. Through the recitation of Mangalam Mangalam, all the Leelas of Braj are remembered and invoked.

In the Mangala verse composed by Paramananddas, he sings —

“Mangalam tan Vasudeva Kumar” (“Auspicious is the body of Vasudeva’s son”). Here, a question may arise — since Paramananddas is a devotee of Nandnandan (the son of Nanda), why does he refer to the Lord as Vasudeva Kumar (the son of Vasudeva)?

The answer is this: in the Venu Geet and Yugal Geet, the Gopis themselves use the word Devaki-suta (son of Devaki), expressing their Kumarika-bhav — the mood of young maidens. Why so? Because the maidens of Braj refer to Shri Yashoda as “Mother,” and thus, in their hearts, they relate to Shri Thakurji in the mood of a beloved (pati-bhav). Therefore, by calling Him “Vasudeva-suta,” they affirm that beloved relationship. If they were to call Him “Yashoda-suta,” it would imply a brother-sister relationship. Hence, Paramananddas, understanding the subtlety of these moods, used Vasudeva Kumar to express the pati-bhav within the Leela.

Later, Paramananddas came from Shri Gokul to Shri Giriraj for the darshan of Shri Govardhan-dharan (the Lifter of Govardhan). There, during the Mangala Aarti, Paramananddas first sang the Mangalam Mangalam verse. From that time onward, the tradition of singing Mangalam Mangalam began at Shri Govardhannathji’s temple. Thus, Paramananddas was indeed a most blessed and grace-filled devotee (kripapatra bhagavadiya).

Prasang 7 – The Janmashtami Festival with Shri Gusainji

and Paramananddas

And when the festival of Janmashtami approached, Shri Gusainji would first bathe Shri Navneetpriyaji with Panchamrit, adorn Him beautifully, and then proceed to Shri Giriraj Parvat to decorate Shri Govardhannathji. After completing the Rajbhog there, He would return from Shri Giriraj to Shri Gokul. At midnight, He would celebrate the divine birth of Shri Navneetpriyaji with all the proper rituals, rock His cradle, and then perform the Nand Mahotsav at the temple of Shri Nathji.

So when Janmashtami arrived, Shri Gusainji, taking Paramananddas with Him, came from Shri Giriraj to Shri Gokul. On the day of Janmashtami, Shri Gusainji performed the ceremonial Abhyanga Snan (divine bath) of Shri Navneetpriyaji. At that time, Paramananddas sang a Badhai (song of divine celebration). That Badhai was —

✿✿✿

राग धनाश्री -

म ल मंगल गावहु माई, सबे म ल। आजु लाल कौ जन्म दवस है बाजत रंग बधाई ॥१॥

आंगन लीपो चोक पुरावो वप्र पढ़न लागे वेद। करहु संगार स्यामसुन्दर को चोवा चन्दन मेद ॥२॥

आनंद भरी बाबा नन्दजू की रानी फूली अंग न समाई। परमानंददास कौ ठाकुर' बहुत न्योछाव र पाई ॥३॥

Raag Dhanashri –

Come together, O mothers, and sing songs of auspicious joy — all of you together!

Today is the birth day of the beloved Lal (Krishna); the air resounds with music and

celebration. (1)

The courtyards are swept and decorated with sacred designs; the Brahmins begin

reciting the Vedas. Adorn the beautiful Shyamsundar with garments, sandalwood paste,

and fragrant perfumes. (2)

Overflowing with bliss is Mother Yashoda, the queen of Baba Nanda — her joy cannot be

contained within her body. ‘Parmananddas’s Thakur’ (beloved Lord) has received

countless loving offerings and blessings. (3)

✿✿✿

After that, Shri Gusainji adorned Shri Navneetpriyaji and performed the tilak ceremony. At that very moment, Paramananddas sang this verse. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

आज बधाई को दन नीकौ । नंदघरनी जसुम त जायो है लाल भौवतो जी कौ ॥१॥

पंच सब्द बाजे बाजत है घर-घर तें आयो टीको । मंगल कलस लये ब्रजसुन्द र ग्वाल बनायत छीकौ ॥२॥

दे त असीस सकल गोपीजन जीवो को ट बरीसो। 'परमानंददास को ठाकर' गोप भेख जगदीसो॥ ३॥

Raag Sarang –

Today is a most blessed and joyful day of celebration! In the house of Nanda, Mother

Yashoda has given birth to a son — the darling beloved of every heart! (1)

The five kinds of auspicious musical sounds are echoing everywhere; from every home,

tilak marks and decorations are being made. Carrying sacred pots of water, the beautiful

women of Braj decorate the paths with splendor and grace. (2)

All the Gopis offer their blessings, saying — “May He live for countless ages!”

‘Parmananddas’s Thakur,’ the Lord of the Universe, has appeared in the attire of a

cowherd. (3)

राग सारंग -

घर घर ग्वाल देत हैं हेरी। बाजत तालमृदंग बासुरी ढोल दमामा भेरी ॥१॥

लूटत झपटत खात मठाई कही न सकत कोऊ फेरी। उनमद ग्वाल बदत नहीं काहू बजव नता सब घेरी ॥।२॥

वजा पताका तोरनमाला सबे संगारी सेरी। जै जै कृष्ण कहत 'परमानंद´ प्रगटयो कंस कौ बैरी ॥। ३॥

Raag Sarang –

In every house the Gopas are rejoicing; the rhythm of drums, mridangs, flutes, and

trumpets fills the air. (1)

They seize and share sweets in cheerful play — none can describe the joy of that scene!

The cowherds are in such blissful madness, while women sing and surround them in

delight. (2)

Banners and garlands adorn every doorway; each street shines with festive decoration.

Crying “Victory! Victory to Shri Krishna!” — sings ‘Parmananddas,’ as the enemy of

Kansa is revealed to the world. (3)

✿✿✿

In this way, Paramananddas sang many verses. After that, at midnight, Shri Gusainji performed the divine birth ceremony of Shri Navneetpriyaji, placing Him gently in the cradle. Shri Gusainji Himself assumed the forms of Shri Nandarayaji, Shriyashodaji, and the Gopis and Gwalas, enacting the sacred Leela. At that very time, Paramananddas sang this verse. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग धनाश्री -

जसोदा रानी सोवन फूले फूली। तुम्हारे पुत्र भयो कुलमंडन वासुदेव समतूली ॥१॥

दे त असीस बरधी जे ग्वा ल न गाम – गाम तें आई । ले ले भेट सबै म ल नकसी मंगल चार बधाई ॥२॥

ऐसे दसक होइ जो और तो सब कोऊ सचुपावे। बाढौ बंस नंद बाबा कौ 'परमानंद' ि◌जय भावे ॥ ३॥

Raag Dhanashri –

Queen Yashoda is overflowing with joy — her heart blooms with delight! Your son is

born, the jewel of the clan, equal in glory to Vasudev Himself. (1)

The elder Gopis, coming from every village, give blessings aloud; each

brings gifts in her

hands, joining together to sing auspicious songs of celebration. (2)

May there be such a joyful time again and again, and may everyone witness this bliss!

May the lineage of Baba Nanda ever flourish — this is the heartfelt wish of

'Parmananddas.' (3)

✿✿✿

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this verse, Paramananddasji expresses — "May there be such a group of ten, by whose presence everyone attains truth and joy." To fulfill the truth of the devotees' words, ten divine forms manifested — the seven sons of Shri Gusainji, along with Shri Gusainji Himself, Shri Acharyaji, and Shri Govardhannathji. These ten divine forms appeared together, granting bliss to all.

Here, the word "sab" refers to all the divine souls of the Pushtimarg — the blessed and grace-filled devotees. In this way, Paramananddasji sang the kirtan filled with this divine sentiment and realization. Afterwards, Shri Nandarayaji, along with the Gopis, Gwalas, and groups of Vaishnavas, carried their beloved Lalji (the divine child) and celebrated the Dadhikando festival — the joyous play of curd, butter, and milk.

At that moment, Paramananddas's heart became overwhelmed with divine joy; his mind was completely absorbed in bliss. In that ecstasy, Paramananddas began to dance and sang this verse. In the intensity of divine love, Paramananddas even forgot the order and sequence of the musical ragas. Though it was the middle of the night, he sang in Rag Sarang. That verse was —

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

आज नंदराय के आनंद भयो। नाचत गोपी कर त कोलाहल मंगल चार ठयो ॥१॥

राती पीयरी चोली पहेरे नौतम झूमक सारी। चोवा चंदन अंग लगाए सेंदुर मांग सवारी ॥२॥

माखन दूध दह्यो भ र भाजन सकलग्वाल ले आए। बाजत बेनु पखान महुव र गावत गीत सुहाये ॥

३॥

हरद दूब अक्षत द ध कुमकुम आंगन बाढ़ी कीच । हसत परस्पर प्रेम मु दत मन ला ग ला ग भुज बीच ॥४॥

चहुँ वेद ध्व न करत महामु न पंच सब्द ढम ढोल । 'परमानंद' बढयो गोकुल में आनंद हदै कलोल ॥५॥

Raag Sarang –

Today great joy has arisen in the house of Nand! The Gopis dance in delight, making

joyful sounds — all around, the air is filled with auspicious celebration. (1)

They wear yellow skirts and new blouses, with beautiful dangling earrings that sway.

Their bodies are adorned with red cloth and sandalwood paste, and their foreheads are

graced with bright vermilion. (2)

Bringing pots full of butter, milk, and curd, all the cowherds gather together. Flutes,

drums, and horns resound joyfully, as sweet songs echo in every direction. (3)

Turmeric, sacred grass, rice grains, curd, and vermilion decorate the courtyards in

abundance. Laughing and embracing one another with love, their hearts overflow with

divine happiness. (4)

The great sages chant the sounds of the four Vedas, and drums beat with the five sacred

notes. ‘Parmananddas’ sings — in Gokul, boundless joy and divine celebration have

arisen! (5)

✿✿✿

After singing that verse, Paramananddas became overwhelmed by divine love and fell unconscious to the ground. Then Shri Gusainji, with His own lotus hands, lifted Paramananddas up, took water in His joined palms, recited sacred Vedic mantras, and sprinkled the water upon him.

At that moment, the overflowing love that had made Paramananddas faint became steady and composed within his heart. He then experienced the full realization of the divine Leela and began to sing again in blissful devotion. In this way, Shri Gusainji showered immense grace upon Paramananddas. After that, Paramananddas sang the cradle (palna) verse. That verse was —

राग बलावल-

हालरो हुलराव त माता। ब ल ब ल जाय घोष सुख दाता ॥१॥

अ त लो हत कर चरन सरोजे। जे ब्रह्मा दक मनसा खोजे ॥२॥

जसुम त अपनो पुन्य बचारे । बारबार मुख कमल नहारे ॥३॥

अ खल भुवनप त गरूडागामी। नंदसुवन 'परमानंदस्वामी' ॥४॥

Raag Bilawal –

Mother Yashoda gently rocks her child, singing with love — “Blessed, blessed am I! You

are the giver of joy to all the cowherds.” (1)

Your lotus hands and feet glow with deep crimson, the very form that even Brahma and

the gods long to behold in meditation. (2)

Yashoda reflects upon her immense good fortune, again and again gazing at her child’s

lotus-like face. (3)

You are the Lord of all worlds, the rider of Garuda — O son of Nanda, You are ‘Parmanand

Swami,’ the Supreme Bliss Himself. (4)

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Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this way, Paramananddasji sang the words “Akhila Bhuvanapati Garudagami.” Here, Akhila Bhuvanapati means “the Lord of all the worlds,” referring to Shri Bhagavan seated upon Garuda — the Supreme Lord who is the Master of the entire creation. When he said Nandasuvan Thakur (the son of Nanda, Shri Krishna), Paramananddas expressed, “He is my own Lord and Master.” Hearing this kirtan, Shri Gusainji became extremely pleased with Paramananddas.

After that, Paramananddas composed and sang another verse in Rag Kanharo. In divine love, the sequence of musical ragas does not matter — the sequence follows the flow of the Leela itself. As the Leela appeared in divine vision, it revealed itself to Paramananddas, and accordingly, he sang in that same inspiration. That verse was —

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राग कान्हरो -

रानीजु तहारो घर सुबस बसो। सुनहु जसोदा तहारे ढोटा को न्हात हु िज न बार खसो ॥ १॥

कोऊ करत वेद मंगल धु न कोऊ गावो कोऊ हंसो। नर ख नर ख मुख कमल नयन कौ आनंद प्रेम हये हुलसो ॥।२॥

दे त असीस सकल गोपीजन कोऊ अ त आनंद लसौ। 'परमानंद' नंद घर आनंद पुत्रजन्म भयो जगत जसो ॥३॥

Raag Kanharo –

O Queen, your home is filled with divine grace! Listen, Yashoda — your little one is being

bathed today; do not let Him slip even for a moment! (1)

Some chant Vedic hymns of auspiciousness, some sing, and others laugh in joy. Gazing

again and again upon His lotus face, their eyes overflow with love and delight. (2)

All the Gopis give their blessings, their hearts radiant with boundless happiness.

‘Parmanand’ proclaims — In Nanda’s house, great joy has arisen with the birth of this

divine son, whose glory fills the world. (3)

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Then Paramananddas sang this verse of blessings. After that, Shri Gusainji placed His son, Shri Giridharji, near Shri Navneetpriyaji and joyfully performed the Dadhikando festival. Then, taking Paramananddas along, Shri Gusainji went for the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. Seeing the Dadhikando celebrations there, Paramananddas became completely absorbed in the bliss of the divine Leela-rasa.

Afterward, Shri Gusainji offered the Rajbhog to Shri Govardhannathji and came outside. Seeing the extraordinary, divine state of Paramananddas, Shri Gusainji said, “Just as Kumbhandas attained divine absorption and withdrawal in the Lord’s youthful Leela (Kishor Leela), in the same way, Paramananddas has now attained divine absorption and withdrawal in the Lord’s childhood Leela (Bal Leela).”

Later, Paramananddas offered dandvat pranam to Shri Gusainji, descended from the mountain, bowed before the flag of Shri Govardhannathji, and went near Surabhi Kund. There, reaching his own cottage, he stopped speaking altogether. Immersed in the bliss of Nand Mahotsav rasa, Paramananddas resolved to leave his earthly body. He went to the bank of Surabhi Kund, lay down, and rested there.

Meanwhile, Shri Gusainji completed Shri Nathji’s Rajbhog Aarti and the Anosar ceremony. After that, Shri Gusainji asked His sevaks, “During the Rajbhog Aarti today, I did not see Paramananddas — where has he gone?” Then one Vaishnav came forward and humbly said to Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! Today Paramananddas appears deeply absorbed and silent; he is not speaking to anyone. He has gone to Surabhi Kund and is lying there.”

Then Shri Gusainji, taking that Vaishnav along, went to Surabhi Kund and came near Paramananddas. Placing His divine hand upon Paramananddas’s forehead, Shri Gusainji said, “Paramananddas! I know what is in your heart. Now your darshan will become rare and difficult for this world.” Then Paramananddas rose and offered sastang dandvat pranam to Shri Gusainji. At that moment, Paramananddas sang this verse. That verse was —

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राग सारंग -

प्री त तो नंदनंदन सो कीजे। संप त बप त परे प्र तपाले कृपा करें तो जीजे ॥१॥

परम उदार चतुर चंताम न सेवा सु मरन माने। चरन कमल की छाया राखे अंतरग त की जानें ॥२॥

वेद पुरान भागवत भाखे कयो भक्तन मन भायो। 'परमानंद' इंद्र को वैभव वप्र सुदामा पायो ॥३॥

Raag Sarang –

Place your love only in Nandanandan (the son of Nanda). He protects in both prosperity

and adversity — if He grants His mercy, life becomes truly blessed. (1)

He is supremely generous, wise, and like the wish-fulfilling gem; He delights in seva

(devotional service) and remembrance. He shelters devotees beneath the shade of His

lotus feet and knows the deepest feelings of every heart. (2)

The Vedas, Puranas, and Bhagavat sing His glory — He has captured the hearts of all

devotees. ‘Parmanand’ says — even the splendor of Indra, was bestowed upon the

Brahmin Sudama by His grace. (3)

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Then Paramananddas sang that verse before Shri Gusainji and offered it to Him with deep devotion.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this verse, Paramananddasji prayed to Shri Gusainji, saying — “The love I hold for You, may it forever remain filled with one constant stream of grace. O most merciful Lord, You protect Your devotee under the cool shade of Your lotus hand. Even now, please grant me Your darshan and place Your lotus hand upon my head. Within my heart, You have fulfilled the deepest longing of my soul.

The Vedas and Puranas all proclaim that You always delight in giving joy to Your devotees. Just as, when no soul worthy of Indra’s post was found, Bhagavan Himself took the form of Indra and carried out Indra’s duties — so too, You have bestowed grace and divine wealth upon Your devotee Sudama, yet Sudama never became proud.

In the same way, You perform Your divine Leelas in Braj in the form of supreme bliss, and through that compassion, You have blessed me. How can I ever describe the greatness of Your qualities? I can never reach their end." In this way, Paramananddasji offered this heartfelt prayer to Shri Gusainji. Hearing this verse, Shri Gusainji became greatly pleased.

At that moment, one Vaishnav said to Paramananddas, "Please tell me some means of practice or devotion that I can follow, so that Shri Thakurji may become pleased with me and shower His grace." Then Paramananddas, joyfully and kindly, said to Vaishnav, "Listen carefully. I will tell you an easy and direct means. If you listen to it with a devoted and attentive heart, you will surely attain success and divine realization." After speaking these words with affection and reassurance, Paramananddas sang a verse for that Vaishnav. That verse was —

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राग भैरख -

प्रात समै उ ठ क रए श्रीलक्षमन सुत गान। प्रगट भए श्रीवल्लभ प्रभु देत भिक्त दान ॥ १॥

श्री वद्दलेस महाप्रभु रूप ही सुहान। श्री ग रधर श्री ग रधर उदय भयो भान ॥२॥

श्रीगो वंद आनंदकंद कहा बरनों गुनगान। श्रीबालकृष्ण बालके ल रूप ही सुहान ॥३॥

श्रीगोकुलनाथ प्रगट कयो मारग बखान । श्रीरघुनाथलाल देख मन्मथ ही लजान ॥४॥

श्रीयदुनाथ महाप्रभु पूरन भगवान। श्रीघनश्याम पूरन काम पोथी में ध्यान ॥५॥

पांडुरंग बठ्ठलेस करत वेद गान। 'परमानंद' नर ख लीला थके सुर वमान ॥६॥

Raag Bhairakh –

At the break of dawn, rise and sing the praises of Shri Lakshman's divine son. Shri

Vallabh Prabhu has manifested — bestowing the gift of pure devotion. (1)

The radiant form of Shri Vitthalesh Mahaprabhu shines resplendent; and like the rising

sun, Shri Giridhar — Shri Giridhar — has appeared in glory. (2)

Shri Govind, the source of bliss, whose virtues are beyond words —

Shri Balakrishna,

whose divine childhood plays are supremely charming. (3)

Shri Gokulnath revealed the sacred path of grace; and beholding Shri Raghunathlal, even

Kamadeva (the god of love) feels shy. (4)

Shri Yadunath Mahaprabhu, the complete manifestation of the Lord; and Shri

Ghanshyam — the fulfillment of all desires — is meditated upon in the sacred texts. (5)

Pandurang Vitthalesh sings the hymns of the Vedas; ‘Parmanand’ says — even the

celestial beings grow weary, watching the endless play of His divine pastimes. (6)

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In this way, Paramananddas sang that kirtan. Hearing it, Shri Gusainji and all the assembled Vaishnavas became very pleased. Then Shri Gusainji asked Paramananddas, “Paramananddas! Now, where is your mind resting?” In reply, Paramananddas sang this kirtan in Rag Sarang. That verse was —

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राग सारंग -

राधे बैठी तलक संवार त। मृगनैनी कुसुमाकर ध र नंदसुवनकौ रूप बचार त ॥ १॥

दरपन हाथ संगार बनाव त बासर सम जुग ढार त। अंतर प्री त स्यामसुंदरसों ह र संग के ल सम्हार त ॥ २॥

बासर गत रजनी ब्रज आवत मलत गोवद्धनधारी। 'परमानंदरवामी' के संगम मु दत भई ब्रजनारी ॥ ३॥

Raag Sarang –

Radha sits adorning her tilak, the doe-eyed one holding a mirror of flowers, lost in

thought upon the beautiful form of Nanda’s son. (1)

Holding the mirror, she perfects her ornamentation, the day passing like a moment in

her longing. Her heart overflows with love for Shyamsundar, as she prepares for the

joyful play with Hari. (2)

When the day ends and night falls, the Lord of Govardhan comes to meet her. With

‘Parmanand Swami’s’ beloved Lord by her side, the maidens of Braj are filled with

radiant bliss. (3)

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In this way, with his mind completely absorbed in the divine Leela of the Divine Couple (Jugal Swaroop), Paramananddas left his mortal body and attained the eternal Leela of Shri Govardhannathji.

Afterward, Shri Gusainji came to Gopalpur, took his bath, and ascended the mountain to perform the Utthapan (morning awakening) of Shri Govardhannathji. Then, after completing the Seva up to the Sayan (evening rest) and performing the Anosar ceremony, Shri Gusainji descended from the mountain and sat upon His seat.

Then all the Vaishnavas performed the Agni Sanskar (cremation) of Paramananddas’s body. Afterward, they came to Gopalpur and, appearing before Shri Gusainji, began to praise Paramananddas greatly, speaking of his devotion and divine state.

At that time, Shri Gusainji, with His own divine lips, said before the Vaishnavas, “In the path of Pushti (Pushtimarg), there have been two great oceans — one is Surdas, and the other is Paramananddas. In their hearts dwell unfathomable depths of divine rasa, the treasure of Bhagavad Leelas where countless jewels of divine bliss reside.” In this way, Shri Gusainji praised Paramananddas through His own holy speech.

Thus, Paramananddasji was one of those divine, grace-filled devotees (kripapatra bhagavadiya) of Shri Acharyaji, upon whom Shri Govardhannathji was ever pleased. Therefore, the story (Varta) of Paramananddas has no end — it is beyond words, indescribable, and cannot be expressed fully, no matter how much one speaks.

Varta 83 - Kumbhandas

Now, the sevak of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, Kumbhandasji Gorva Kshatriya, lived in Jamunavata. The feelings behind his story are being told, as his verses are sung among the eight poets of Ashta Chhap.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Kumbhandasji, in the divine play (Leela), is the same as Arjuna, the intimate friend of Shri Thakurji. In the daytime Leela, he is Arjuna the friend, and in the nighttime Leela, he becomes Vishakha Sakhi, a companion of Shri Swaminiji. The other form of Vishakhaji is Krishnadas Meghna, who always remained with Shri Acharyaji during the Earth circumambulation, and Kumbhandasji always remained with Shri Govardhannathji. Thus, in feeling, Kumbhandasji is Arjuna in the sakhabhav (mood of friendship) and Vishakha in the sakhībhav (mood of companion).

Giriraj (Govardhan) has eight gateways. One of them is near Anyor. He is the main sevak for the service of that gate. The village name “Jamunavata” is so called because, in the Saraswat Kalpa, there were two streams of the Yamuna River. One became Jamunavata flowing near Agra, and the other was Chirghat near Shri Gokul. Later, in that Kalpa, both streams united and flowed as one, and at that time there was no Agra or other villages. From Chirghat, the stream reached Govardhan, where the Rasa of the five chapters (Panchadhyayi) was performed in Parasoli above the Chandrasarovar.

The Braj devotees, when they became invisible (in divine absorption), went from Chandrasarovar asking the vine of Drumlata and reached near Govindkund. There they saw the lotus feet of Shri Thakurji, and because of that, there are footprints of Shri Thakurji at Apsarakund.

Then, proceeding further, the braids of Radha’s companion were hidden; she performed all her adornment there with vermilion, kohl, and other ornaments. Therefore, that place still has red (Sinduri), black (Kajali), and shining (Bajni) stones.

Afterwards, at Rudrakund, Radha’s companion became offended. She said to Shri Thakurji, “You do not go with me!” Then Shri Thakurji said, “Climb on my shoulders,” and near a tamarind tree He disappeared. Then Radha’s companion cried aloud saying, “O Lord,

beloved of Ramana! Where are You, O mighty-armed? Out of mercy, show me Your presence, O friend!" Therefore, that pond is called Rudrakund. Even now people call that place Rudrakund. Later, all the Gopis gathered there.

Then proceeding further, asking from one tree to another, 'Jaan' and 'Ajaan,' they reached Jamunavata on the banks of Shri Yamunaji, where the Gopikas sang the Gopika Geet ("Jayati te' dhikam...") and all the devotees wept. Then Shri Thakurji Himself appeared and again performed the Rasa at Parasoli, Chandrasarovar, due to which He became tired. Then He enjoyed water sports in the waters of Shri Yamunaji.

Thus, in the Saraswat Kalpa, the Rasa of the five chapters took place near Shri Giriraj. The Braj devotees wandered far and wide in search of Shri Thakurji's meeting, but seeing darkness, they returned —"Having entered the darkness, they turned back from there."

That darkness was near the village "Samai," ahead of Shyamdhak. There is Shyamvan, a very dense forest. Therefore, according to the Panchadhyayi, all places are shown there. From Kalidah Ghat onwards, that region too is called Shri Vrindavan, where also is Bansivat. In many Shvet Varaha Kalpas, the Rasa of the five chapters was performed there, and in the Saraswat Kalpa, in the autumn season, the Rasa was performed at Parasoli upon Shri Giriraj. Later, in the spring months of Chaitra and Vaisakh, the Rasa was performed near Kesighat, below Bansivat. Thus, the Rasa was performed at two places; however, the principal Rasa of the Panchadhyayi in the Saraswat Kalpa was at Giriraj. These are the distinctions in the divine plays.

Hence, in Jamunavata, one stream of Shri Yamunaji flowed during the Saraswat Kalpa; because of that, the village was named "Jamunavata." Between Nandgaon and Barsana, near Sanket, the stream reached Shri Jamunavata. Therefore, near Sanket, there are marks of Shri Yamunaji's arrival. Thus, it is said that nowadays people do not have firm faith; but when they see and hear these signs, they believe. And when the fruits of faith manifest, feelings increase; therefore, these things are explained openly.

Prasang 1 – Kumbhandas Lives in Jamunavata

In Jamunavata lived Kumbhandas. Above the Chandrasarovar in Parasoli, the fields of Kumbhandas's forefathers were situated. There Kumbhandas cultivated the land. So in Parasoli, Kumbhandas

possessed much farmland. From childhood, Kumbhandas had no attachment to household life, never told lies, and did not commit sinful acts. He lived in the simple manner of a pure Brajwasi.

When Kumbhandas grew up, he was married near the village ‘Jet’ in Bahulavan. The woman he married was ordinary and not related to the divine Leela. Yet, the company of a Vaishnav devotee like Kumbhandas cannot go fruitless—she too was uplifted. But at that time, Shri Govardhannathji had not yet manifested upon Shri Giriraj. When Shri Govardhannathji would call Shri Acharyaji near Him, then Shri Acharyaji would take shelter there, and this Kumbhandas would become known as a devotee of God.

Once, while performing Earth circumambulation, Shri Acharyaji came to the South in Jharikhanda. Then Shri Govardhannathji said to Shri Acharyaji, “We have manifested in Shri Govardhan. Please come here and bring us out, and manifest our service in this world so that it may spread.” Hearing this, Shri Acharyaji stopped the Earth circumambulation there in Jharikhanda and came straight to Braj. At that time, Damodardas Harsani, Krishnadas Meghna, Madhav Bhatt, Narayandas, and Ramdas of Sikandarpur — these five sevaks were accompanying Shri Acharyaji.

Then Shri Acharyaji, under the Govardhan mountain, near Anyor, sat upon a platform at the doorway of Saddu Pandey. Then, to know about the manifestation of Shri Govardhannathji, Shri Acharyaji asked Saddu Pandey, his brother Manikchand Pandey, and Naro Bhavani — all sevaks — who narrated the details as described earlier in the story of Saddu Pandey.

Later, Ramdas Chauhan, who lived in a cave near Puchhri, became a sevak, and Shri Acharyaji entrusted him with the service of Shri Govardhannathji. Ramdas, along with the Brajwasis and other sevaks, began to serve.

Kumbhandas lived in Jamunavata. There he heard the news that a great saint had come to Anyor and that Shri Govardhannathji, Shri Thakurji, had manifested from the Govardhan mountain, and that Saddu Pandey and many other Brajwasis had become sevaks. Hearing this, Kumbhandas said to his wife, “Let us go to Anyor and become sevaks of Shri Acharyaji. Through his grace, Shri Thakurji will also bless us.”

Then his wife said, “I will go if those great souls give me a son, as I have none.” Thinking thus, both of them came to Shri Acharyaji and

bowed down. Shri Acharyaji asked, “Kumbhandas, have you come?” Then Kumbhandas bowed again and prayed, “Maharaj, I have been wandering for many days; now please show your mercy upon me.” Kumbhandas was a divine being, and at the very sight of Shri Acharyaji, he recognized Shri Acharyaji’s divine form. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Kumbhandas, “You both, husband and wife, go and bathe.”

Then both of them bathed in Sankarshan Kund and came to Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji then gave names to Kumbhandas and his wife. The wife prayed, “Maharaj, you are great. I have no son; please bless me with one.” Shri Acharyaji became pleased and said kindly, “You will have seven sons; do not worry.”

Hearing this, the wife became very happy. Then Kumbhandas said to his wife, “You asked for what you desired; if you had asked Shri Thakurji, He would have given that. You should have asked for Him.” The wife replied, “I asked for what I wanted; you may ask for what you desire.” Kumbhandas then remained silent.

After that, Shri Acharyaji built a small temple for Shri Govardhandhar and installed Shri Govardhandhar in it, giving the service to Ramdas Chauhan. Ramdas, Saddu Pandey, and other Brajwasis brought all necessary items. Milk, curd, and butter were offered to Shri Govardhannathji, and Ramdas sustained himself from that Mahaprasad.

And the Brajwasis—sevaks like Kumbhandas and other devotees—received the instruction of Shri Acharyaji: “Shri Govardhannathji is our everything. Therefore, remain devoted to His service, and do not take Mahaprasad without having the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. Perform His service with full care and attention.”

Kumbhandas sang kirtans very beautifully; his voice was also very melodious. Therefore, Shri Acharyaji said to Kumbhandas, “At proper times, daily sing kirtans describing the divine plays of Shri Govardhannathji.” Every morning, after waking Shri Govardhannathji, Shri Acharyaji would say to Kumbhandas, “Now describe some divine Leela.” Then Kumbhandas would bow before Shri Govardhannathji and first sing this verse. The verse is:

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राग बलावल-

सांझ के सौचे बोल तहारे। रजनी अनत जगे नंदनंदन आये नपट सवारे ॥।१॥

आतुर भए नीलपट ओढे पीयरे बसन बसारे। 'कुंभनदास प्रभु' गोवद्धनधर भले बचन प्र तपारे ॥२।।

Raag Bilawal –

In the evening, I think upon Your gentle words. The night passes as I remain awake,

Until Nandanandan arrives, fully adorned. □1□

Restless with longing, He comes draped in a blue cloth, having forgotten even His yellow

garments. 'Kumbhandas Prabhu' says — The Lord of Govardhan truly fulfills His sweet

promises. □2□

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So, hearing this kirtan from the mouth of Kumbhandas, Shri Acharyaji said, "Kumbhandas! Have you experienced the rasa related to the Nikunj-Leela (the intimate bower pastimes)?" Then Kumbhandas offered obeisance and said, "Maharaj! By your grace." Then Shri Acharyaji said, "You have great fortune. First, the Lord has revealed to you the experience of the principle-strength (prameya-bala); because of this, you will always remain immersed in the nectar of Hari."

Then Kumbhandas made a request: "Maharaj! Above all, please grant me the experience of only this rasa." Thus Kumbhandas performed all his kirtans related to the Yugal-Swarup (the Divine Couple). He did not sing congratulations, cradle-songs, or childhood pastimes. In this way, he became a recipient of grace, a devotee of God. In this manner, after showing grace to Kumbhandasji and other Vaishnavas, Shri Acharyaji—who had left the Earth-circumambulation in the South at Jharikhanda—again set out to perform the circumambulation for the sake of bestowing grace upon living beings.

Prasang 2 – Shri Nathji Moved to Tond ka Ghane

And here, Kumbhandasji would come every morning from "Jamunavata" to Shri Giriraj for the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji, and would sing kirtans at the appropriate times. Shri Govardhannathji Himself showed affectionate feelings toward Kumbhandas and began to play with him, speaking of playful matters.

After some days, there arose a disturbance from a mlechchha, who

came from the west plundering and killing the entire village. He set up camp five kos ahead of Shri Giriraj. Then Saddu Pandey, Manikchand Pandey, Ramdasji, and Kumbhandasji—these four Vaishnavas—considered in their minds, “This mlechchha who has come is evil, an enemy of the religion of God. What should be decided?” These four Vaishnavas were intimate with Shri Nathji, and they spoke with Shri Govardhannathji. Therefore, the four Vaishnavas went into the temple and asked Shri Nathji, “Maharaj! What should we do now? A mlechchha hostile to dharma is coming, plundering. Please give a gracious command, and we will do that.”

Then Shri Govardhannathji gave this command: “Seat Me and take Me to the thicket of Tond ka Ghana. My mind desires to go there.” Then the four Vaishnavas requested, “Maharaj! At this time, what mount should be used?” Shri Govardhannathji said, “There is a buffalo at Saddu Pandey’s house; bring that, and I will go mounted upon it.” Then Saddu Pandey brought that buffalo. Thereupon Shri Govardhannathji mounted that buffalo and departed.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): That buffalo was a divine being. In the Leela, she is the gardener-woman (malin) of Shri Vrishabhanuji’s house. She would daily make flower garlands and take them to Shri Vrishabhanuji’s house. In the Leela, her name is “Vrinda.” One day, Shri Swaminiji came to the garden. At that time, Vrinda had a little daughter with her, whom she was feeding. So she did not rise and offer obeisance, nor did she show due regard. Even then, Shri Swaminiji did not say anything to her. After that, Shri Swaminiji said to Vrinda, “Go to Shri Nandarayaji’s house and, presenting the matter to Shri Thakurji, tell Him that we shall come here.”

Hearing the words of Shri Swaminiji, Vrinda said, “Right now I must finish making the garlands and send them to Shri Vrishabhanuji; therefore I will not go.” Hearing this, Shri Swaminiji said to her, “When I came here, you did not rise and show honor, and even the task I asked of you you did not do. Therefore, you are not fit to remain in this garden. Fall from here and take birth as a buffalo.” Thus Shri Swaminiji gave this curse to that gardener-woman. Then that malin fell at the lotus feet of Shri Swaminiji and began to pray and praise greatly, and said, “Now please show such grace that I may come here again.”

Then Shri Swaminiji said to her, “When Shri Thakurji mounts upon you and goes into the forest, then you will be accepted. After leaving the body of a buffalo, you will take the body of a sakhi again and

become the gardener-woman of this garden." Thus that malin became a buffalo in the house of Saddu Pandey.

Upon that very buffalo, Shri Nathji Himself mounted and went to "Tod ka Ghana." Then, on one side of Shri Govardhannathji, Ramdasji held and walked, and on the other side Saddu Pandey held. Kumbhandas and Manikchand Pandey walked in the middle as support. On the way, many thorns pricked; their clothes were torn; they suffered greatly. The path was not good. In that "Tod ke Ghana," there is a bower in the middle. There is a river there, so Kumbhandas and Manikchand Pandey—these two went ahead of Shri Nathji showing the path, pushing aside creepers and thorns as they went. In this way, within "Tond ka Ghana," there is a platform in the middle, there is a small pond, and there is a round square in the form of a circle. There Ramdasji and Kumbhandasji asked Shri Nathji, "Where will You reside?" Then Shri Nathji Himself gave the command, "I will reside on this very platform." Then, the cushion that had been placed beneath Shri Nathji on the buffalo— they spread that very cushion upon the platform and seated Shri Nathji upon it.

Thereafter, Shri Nathji commanded Ramdasji, "Offer some bhog and then step aside and stand." Then Ramdasji and Kumbhandasji thought in their minds, "Some Leela has been performed here to fulfill the desires of the Braj-devotees." Then Ramdasji offered a little food. Then Shri Govardhannathji said, "Place all the items of food." In his haste, Ramdasji had made two seers of wheat porridge, and he offered it all as bhog. Afterwards, Ramdasji said to Shri Govardhannathji, "All the food has been offered, but if we are to live here, then what will we do?" Then Shri Govardhannathji said, "We will not stay here. Only this much needed to be done." Thereafter, along with Kumbhandas, Saddu Pandey, Manikchand Pandey, and Ramdasji—these four people —went and sat behind a tree.

Then, within the nikunj, Shri Swaminiji brought, with Her own hands, the items for fulfilling the devotees' desires, which She had prepared. Then it was decided that they would dine together. While preparing the items, the delightful Shri Swaminiji became tired. Therefore, Shri Govardhannathji Himself, from His own mouth, gave a command to Kumbhandas: "Kumbhandas! If you sing some kirtan at this time, the mind will be pleased. And I shall arrange the items, so you sing the kirtan." Then Kumbhandas thought in his mind, "The Lord wishes to hear something humorous." And Kumbhandas and the other four Vaishnavas were hungry and also pricked by thorns, so at that time Kumbhandas sang a verse. That verse —

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

भावत है तो हटोड कौ घनो । कांटा लागे गोखरू भागे फटयो जात यह तनो ॥१॥

संह कहा लोकरी कौ डर यह कहा बा नक बन्यो । 'कुंभनदास' तुम गोवद्धनधर वह कौन रांड ढेढ़नी कौ जन्यो ॥२॥

Raag Sarang –

It seems that your love for this prickly thicket forest is very great.

A thorn pricks, a bur-grass pierces, you run, and this body gets torn. 1

Why would a lion fear a fox? How did this come to be? 'Kumbhandas', You are

Govardhandhar — Who is that low woman's son who would speak such words? 2

✿✿✿

Hearing this kirtan, Shri Govardhannathji and Shri Swaminiji became very pleased. All the Vaishnavas too became joyful. After that, at the time of the garland ceremony, Kumbhandas sang this verse. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग मालकोस –

बोलत स्याम मनोहर बैठे कमल खंड और कदम की छैयां। कुसु मत दुम अ ल पीक गूंजत को कला कल गावत त हयां

॥१॥

सुनत दू तका के बचन माधुरी भयो हुलास तन मन म हयां। कुंभनदास प्रभु ब्रज जुव त मलन चली र सक कुंवर

ग रधर प हयां ॥२॥

Raag Malkauns –

Speaking sweetly, Shyam Manohar sits upon a lotus seat, beneath the shade of the

kadamba tree. There, the blossoms are blooming, the bees hum, the cuckoo sings in soft

melody. 1

Hearing the messenger-girl's words, sweetness arose, and joy swelled within His body

and mind. 'Kumbhandas Prabhu' says — the young maiden of Braj went to meet the

rasik prince, Giridhar. 2

Hearing this kirtan, Shri Govardhannathji became very pleased. Then Shri Swaminiji asked Shri Govardhandhar, "By what means did you come here?" Shri Govardhannathji replied, "At Saddu Pandey's house there was a buffalo, and I came upon it."

Hearing these words of Shri Govardhannathji, Shri Swaminiji looked toward that buffalo with compassion and said, "This is my garden's gardener-woman. Because she disobeyed me, she became a buffalo. But today she has performed good service, therefore her offense is now removed." In this way, after performing many kinds of playful acts in Tond ka Ghana, Shri Swaminiji returned to Barsana.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): There were many thorns there—so one may wonder, how did Shri Swaminiji pass through? The answer is that the trees of Braj are of the highest spiritual nature. Wherever a wish arises, there the creepers, vines, fruits, and flowers appear accordingly. The thorns that are seen exist only for worldly people. In that bower, Shri Thakurji, along with all the Braj devotees, performs divine pastimes. The thorns serve as a cover for concealment from outsiders and those bound by decorum; otherwise, the forest would be too dense. The devotees of Braj are always eager for service, so there is no doubt about that.

When Shri Govardhannathji mounted the buffalo and went to Tond ka Ghana, at that time four Vaishnavas were with Him. Along the path, many Brajwasis were met, but they did not see Shri Govardhannathji —thinking only that four people were leading a buffalo. If there had been no thorns, all the Brajwasis would have come there. In this way, this Leela of Shri Thakurji is a nectar of play performed only for the joy of the Braj devotees. To move hidden in fear is, in fact, the sweetness of this rasa.

In this rasa, the feeling of lordship (Ishwarata) is not to be contemplated. If one meditates only on His divinity, then where is the scope for loving devotion? The divine play includes a gentle fear, but that fear is born of love within the sweetness (madhurya) of rasa; in divinity there is no fear. Thus, the rasika devotees who behold with the eyes of divine love experience joy, and through their eyes of wisdom and their divine vision, they perceive the nectar of Leela. When Shri Swaminiji reached Barsana, Shri Govardhannathji called those four devotees close to Him.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): One may wonder here—these devotees are His intimate ones. When they already perceive the divine Leela, why then did Shri Govardhannathji first seat them aside in concealment? The answer is that, although these devotees behold the Leela in the form of sakhis, yet when Shri Swaminiji, with Her own hands, engages in sweet playful acts and offers food to Shri Thakurji, if the sakhis were near, there would be modesty and hesitation. Therefore, when both Divine Forms perform Leela within the bower, the sakhis become watchers hidden behind the vines, joyfully observing the play. So Shri Govardhannathji had seated the devotees behind the screen of creepers, and then called them again.

When the four Vaishnavas came, Shri Govardhannathji said to Saddu Pandey, “Now see, has the disturbance been removed?” Then Saddu Pandey came out of Tond ka Ghana, and at that very time news arrived from Govardhan that the army of the mlechchha which had come had now retreated.

Then Saddu Pandey returned and said to Shri Govardhannathji, “The mlechchha army has fled away.” Then Shri Govardhandhar said, “Now take Me back and seat Me again in the temple on Giriraj.” Then they seated Shri Govardhannathji upon the buffalo, and the four Vaishnavas together carried Shri Nathji and reinstalled Him in the temple upon Shri Giriraj mountain. Then the buffalo descended from the hill, left its body, and regained its divine form in the eternal Leela.

Afterwards, all the Brajwasis came for the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji and were filled with great joy, saying, “Blessed are You, O Devadaman! By Your divine power, such a great calamity that had arisen disappeared in a single moment—none even knew how it happened.” Then Kumbhandas sang before Shri Nathji this verse. The verse is:

राग श्रीराग -

जय त जय त ह रदासवयधरने। वा र विृष्ट नवा र,घोख आर त टा र देवप त मान भंग करने ॥ १॥

जय त पट पीत दा मनी रु चर वर मृदुल अंग सावल जलद वरने। कर अधर बेनु ध र गान कल-रव सब्द सहज बज

युवती जन चत्त हरने ॥२॥

जय त वृन्दा व पन भू म डोल न अ खल लोक वंद न अंबुरुह चरने। तर न-तनया-तीर वहार नंदगोप-कुमार

दासकुंभन' न मत तुव शरने ॥।३॥

Raag Shrirag –

Victory, victory to the best among Hari's servants, the lifter of Govardhan! Who stopped the rainstorm, removed the distress of the cowherds, And shattered the pride of the lord

of the gods. □1□

Victory to Him whose yellow garment flashes like lightning, Whose soft limbs are dark

like a fresh raincloud. Holding the flute to His lips with His hand, He produces sweet

melodious tones that naturally steal the hearts of the maidens. □2□

Victory to Him whose lotus feet cause the whole land of Vrinda forest to tremble, Venerated by all the worlds. The son of Nanda enjoys Himself on the banks of the

daughter of the sun (Yamuna). 'Das Kumbhan' bows at Your refuge. □ 3□

राग श्रीराग -

कृष्ण तरनी तनया तीर रासमंडल रच्यो अधर कर मधुर सुर बेनु बाजे। जुवती जन जूथ संग नतत अनेक रंग नर ख

अ भमान तिज काम लाजे ॥१॥

श्यामतन पीत कौशेय सुभ पद-नख-चिन्द्रका सकल भुव त मर भाजे । ल लत अवतंस भुव भु धनुस लोचन चपल

चतव न मनो मदनबान साजे ॥२॥

मुखर मंजीर क ट कंकनी कुनीत रव वचन गंभीर मनु मेघ गाजे। 'दास कुंभन' नाथ ह रदासवयधरन नख सख

स्वरूप अद्भुत बराजे ॥३॥

Raag Shrirag –

Krishna created the Raas circle on the bank of Yamuna, And His flute played sweet tones

from the touch of His lips and hands. Seeing the maidens dancing in groups in many

colors, He abandoned all pride and even shamed Desire (Kāmadeva). □1□

His dark body, adorned with yellow silk, The moonlike radiance from His toenails drove away all the darkness of the worlds. His charming earrings, the bow-like eyebrows, and

His restless, darting glances All prepare the mind with the arrows of love. □2□ The ringing of anklets on His feet, the girdle-bells at His waist, And the deep tone of His

speech thunder like clouds in the heart. 'Das Kumbhan' sings — from toe to head,

The wondrous form of Hari, lifter of Govardhan, shines resplendently. □3□

✿✿✿

Kumbhandas sang many such kirtans before Shri Govardhannathji. Hearing them, Shri Govardhannathji became deeply pleased with Kumbhandas, and the compositions (padas) of Kumbhandas became famous throughout the world.

Prasang 3 – Kumbhandas and the Emperor Akbar of

Fatehpur Sikri

Kumbhandas composed many padas, and people everywhere began to

sing them. Later, one court musician learned one of Kumbhandasji's padas and sang it before the ruler of the land. The ruler's camp was at Fatehpur Sikri, and there this pada was sung:

✿✿✿

राग धनाश्री -

देखरी आवनी मदन गोपाल की। सक्रवाहन - ग त नरख लाजत गजग त अनूप लटक चालकी ॥ १॥

स्याम तन क ट बसन मन हरन सुन्दरता उरश्रीमाल की। भोह धनुस सिज मनह मदन सर चतवनी लोचन वसाल

की ॥ २॥

रेनुमिण्डत कुंतल-अलक सोभा केसर कौ तलक भाल की (य) 'दास कुंभन' चारु रास मोहे जगत गोवद्धनधर कुंवर

रसाल की ॥३॥

Raag Dhanashri –

Behold the coming of Madan Gopal! Seeing His steady, powerful gait, even Indra's mount

would feel shy; His elephant-like, incomparable, gently swinging walk enchants all. □1□

His dark body, the cloth at His waist stealing the mind, The beauty of the garland upon

His chest — all captivate the heart. His arched brows, like a bow, prepare the arrows of

love, And His broad eyes cast sidelong glances that pierce the mind. □2□

His curls, dust-covered, shine beautifully; The saffron tilak upon His forehead adds to the

splendor. 'Das Kumbhan' says — the charming Raas of the sweet prince, The Lord of

Govardhan, fascinates the entire world. □3□

✿✿✿

Hearing this kirtan, the ruler's heart became absorbed in the pada. He struck his head with emotion and said, "Such great saints have existed on this earth, those who have had the divine vision of the Supreme Lord!" Then the musician said to the ruler, "Your Majesty! The great saint who composed this pada is alive even now." The ruler became very pleased with the musician and asked, "Where is that great saint?" The musician replied, "Near Shri Govardhan, in the village called Jamunavata, that is where he lives. His name is Kumbhandasji."

The ruler said, "Call him here. I wish to meet him." Then the ruler sent his men with all kinds of carriages and mounts to bring Kumbhandas to him. They were sent to the village of Jamunavata. When the men arrived at Jamunavata with the horses and palanquin, Kumbhandasji was not in the village—he was sitting in his fields near Parasoli, at Chandrasarovar. The men first asked about him in the village, then learning where he was, took a local man along and went to Kumbhandasji.

The ruler's messengers said to Kumbhandas, "The ruler has called for you." Kumbhandas replied, "I am a poor Brajwasi; I am not a servant of anyone. What business do I have with the ruler that I should go?" The ruler's men said, "Baba Sahib! We do not understand much. We only have an order from the ruler that we must bring you. The horses and the palanquin have come for your journey. We have been sent by the ruler to take you, and if we do not bring you back, the ruler will have us killed. Therefore, please come with us, meet him once, and then you may return."

Kumbhandas thought to himself, "This difficulty has come upon me; I cannot avoid it now. Whatever hardship comes, I must bear it." The ruler had sent carriages for him, and the men said, "Baba Sahib! Please mount the horse or the palanquin and come quickly." Kumbhandas said to them, "I have never ridden in a carriage or on horseback. Do not speak to me of such things. I will go wearing my wooden sandals, walking on my own feet." The men pleaded much, but Kumbhandas did not mount any carriage; he put on his sandals and walked on foot.

He reached the ruler's camp near Fatehpur Sikri. The ruler was informed, "The great saint Kumbhandas has arrived." Then the ruler called Kumbhandas inside. When he entered, the ruler said, "Baba Sahib! Come forward." Kumbhandas was dressed simply — wearing a coarse dhoti, a torn and faded turban, an old scarf, and worn-out sandals — and he stood before the ruler.

The ruler said, “Baba Sahib! Please sit down.” There was a magnificent jeweled seat there, adorned with pearls and fragrant with perfumes, but in Kumbhandas’s heart arose great sorrow, thinking, “This place feels like hell while alive. Far better are the trees of my Braj, where Shri Govardhandhar Himself plays.” While Kumbhandas thought thus within his heart, the ruler spoke, “Baba Sahib! You have composed many songs in praise of Vishnu. I would like to hear one from your mouth. Please sing a Vishnu-pada.”

Hearing these words, Kumbhandas was troubled in his heart—already distressed, and now asked to sing before a ruler. He felt deeply pained and thought, “Without singing, I will not be released; yet before this mlechchha, I cannot sing the sacred songs of Shri Thakurji’s Leelas. What shall I sing then? My songs are meant only for Shri Govardhannathji, but this foreign ruler has called me here and separated me from my Lord. I must sing something that will displease him—and what harm if he is displeased? What can he do to me?”

Then this thought arose in his mind: “One who is accepted by Shri Manmohan— even if the whole world turns against him, not a single hair of his head will be harmed.” Thinking this, Kumbhandas composed a new pada and sang it before the ruler. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

भक्तन को कहा सकरी काम । आवत जात पन्हैया टूटी बसर गयो ह र नाम ॥ १॥

जाको मुख देखे दुःखे उपजे ताकों करनों परचो प्रनाम। ' कुंभनदास' लाल ग रधर बनु यह सब झूठो धाम ॥।२॥

Raag Sarang –

What use is the Sikri (Capital City) to a devotee? Going and coming, their sandals break

— and they forget Hari’s name. □1□

One whose very face causes sorrow to arise — Why should I bow to such a one?

‘Kumbhandas’ says — without Lal Giridhar, all this world is but a false abode. □2□

✿✿✿

Hearing this pada sung by Kumbhandas, the ruler became very offended within his heart. Then he thought to himself, “If this man had any greed for reward, he would flatter me. But he cares only for his own Lord.” Thinking thus, Emperor Akbar said to Kumbhandas, “Baba Sahib! Please give me some command—whatever you wish, I shall do it.” Kumbhandas replied, “From today onward, never call for me again.” Then the ruler respectfully gave Kumbhandas permission to depart.

As Kumbhandas walked back along the road, his heart was filled with deep sorrow and longing for Shri Govardhannathji. He thought, “When will I again behold the face of Shri Govardhannathji?” Thinking thus, while returning on the road, Kumbhandas sang a pada of separation (viraha). The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग धनाश्री -

कब ह। दे ख हो इन नैननु ! सुंदर स्याम मनोहर मूर त अंग अंग सुख दैननु ।॥१॥

वृन्दावन बहार दन दन प्र त गोप- वृन्द संग लेननु। हँ स हँ स हर ख पतौव न पीवनु बाँ ट बाँ ट पय फेननु ॥२॥

'कुंभनदास' केते दन बते कए रेन सुख सैननु। अब ग रधर बनु न स अरु बासर मन न परत कछु चैननु ॥३॥

Raag Dhanshri –

When will these eyes behold Him? The beautiful Shyam, the enchanting form, whose

every limb gives joy. □1□

Day after day he wanders in Vrindavan, taking along groups of Gopis. Laughing and

rejoicing, He feeds them tender shoots and fruits, sharing and drinking the froth of milk

with them. □2□

‘Kumbhandas’ says — many days have passed, experiencing the happiness of serving

his dust. Now, without Giridhar, at night or day, the mind finds no peace at all. □3□

✿✿✿

Thus, singing this pada along the way, Kumbhandas came up to Shri Giriraj and had the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. Two prahars (about six hours) had passed, but to Kumbhandas it felt as though two ages had gone by. Then, upon seeing the divine face of Shri Govardhannathji, all his sorrow instantly vanished. At that moment, Kumbhandas sang a pada. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग धनाश्री -

नैन भ र देख्यो नंदकुमार । ता दन तें सब भू ल गई ह बसरयो प त – प रवार ॥१॥

बनु देखे हौ बबस भईरी अंग- अंग सब हा र । तातें सु ध है सावरी मूर त लोचन भ र भ र वा र ॥। २॥

रूपरासी प र मत नहीं मानों कैसे मले कन्हाई। 'कुंभनदास प्रभु' गोवद्धनधर मली बहु र उर लाई ॥ ३॥

Raag Dhanashri –

When my eyes beheld Nandakumar fully, from that day I forgot everything — husband

and family slipped from memory. □1□

Without seeing Him I became helpless, every limb lost its strength. Therefore only the

image of the dark-complexioned One remains in awareness — My eyes take His darshan

again and again. □2□

The store of His beauty cannot be measured — How then shall I ever meet Kanhaiya?

‘Kumbhandas Prabhu’ says — when the Lord of Govardhan meets again, he takes one to

His breast. □3□

राग धनाश्री -

हलगन क ठन है या मन की । जाके लये दे ख मेरी सजनी लाज गई सब तन की ॥ १॥

धरम जाउ और लोग हसौ सब अरु आवो कुलगारी। सो क्यों रहे ता ह बनु देखे जो जाकौ हतकारी ॥२॥

रस- लुब्ध एक न मष नहीं छांडत ज्य अधीन मृग गाने। 'कुंभनदास' यह सनेह मरम कौ श्रीगोवद्धनधर जाने ॥३॥

Raag Dhanashri –

The attachment of this mind is very difficult. For His sake, O my friend, all modesty of

the body has gone. □1□

Let religion go, let people laugh, let the whole lineage speak badly — How can one live

without seeing Him who alone is the true well-wisher? □2□

Greedy for his rasa, not leaving him even for a moment, like a deer under the control of

the hunter's song— 'Kumbhandas' says — only Shri Govardhan-dhar knows the secret

of this love. □3□

✿✿✿

Thus, Kumbhandas sang many such padas. Hearing them, Shri Govardhannathji Himself said, "Kumbhandas! You are blessed. Without Me, not even for a moment can you find peace. And without you, nothing pleases Me." In this way, there was deep mutual love between Kumbhandasji and Shri Govardhannathji.

Prasang 4 – Raja Maan Singh's Visit to Shri Govardhannathji

Once, Raja Maan Singh, after conquering many regions in his campaign of victory, came to Agra to meet the ruler of the land. After receiving counsel from the ruler, he prepared to return to his own kingdom. Then Raja Man Singh thought to himself, "Since I have come after a long time, it would be good if I bathed in Shri Mathura before returning to my country."

Thinking thus, Raja Maan Singh came to Shri Mathura and bathed at Vishrant Ghat. The attendants (Chobas) met him and said, "Come for

the darshan of Shri Keshorayji, Shri Thakurji." It was the hot month of Jyeshtha (summer), and the Mathura attendants, knowing that the king was coming, dressed Shri Keshorayji with a zari (gold-embroidered) shawl, garments, backdrop, and canopy — all made of zari. They adorned the deity with gold ornaments.

After the darshan, Raja Maan Singh thought in his mind, "They have dressed Shri Thakurji in all this zari clothing just to show me." Then he made his offerings and departed. Afterwards, they told him, "In Vrindavan there are temples of Shri Thakurji; let us go for darshan there." So Raja Maan Singh came to Shri Vrindavan.

Hearing that Raja Maan Singh was coming for darshan, the saints and mahants of Vrindavan thought, "The king will come here for darshan." Knowing this, they dressed their deities in heavy zari garments—rich robes, scarves, waistbands, trousers, and zari shawls—and adorned them with golden ornaments.

Then Raja Maan Singh went and had darshan in two or three grand temples of Vrindavan and made offerings there. But because of the great summer heat, he returned to his camp saying, "This has all been done just to impress me."

Afterwards, Raja Man Singh left Vrindavan and by the third prahar (late afternoon) reached Shri Govardhan. Someone asked, "Will you go for the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji?" Raja Maan Singh said, "Yes, I must surely have the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji."

Then, arriving at Gopalpur, he asked about the darshan time. Someone said, "The Utthapan darshan has been completed, and preparations for the Bhog darshan are underway." Hearing this, Raja Maan Singh climbed up the hill of Govardhan. It was intensely hot, and walking barefoot under the blazing sun, the king was greatly distressed. Just then, the doors of the Bhog darshan opened. As Raja Maan Singh beheld Shri Govardhannathji, his eyes were filled with tears.

In those days, the service (seva) of Shri Govardhannathji was performed with great opulence. It was the season of heat; rose water was being sprinkled, and the fragrance of argaja flowers filled the air, with scented breezes spreading everywhere. A double-layered canopy of cool white cloth was hung; on Shri Nathji's neck was a pearl garland, pearl earrings, and delicate pearl ornaments. The air was fragrant and refreshing.

Seeing this service arrangement, Raja Man Singh's whole body felt cool and peaceful. He said, "This is true seva! Here Shri Thakurji is seated happily. In the Shrimad Bhagavat, it is said that Shri Krishna manifests directly—and here is that very Shri Govardhannathji. Today I am greatly blessed to have received such darshan."

At that time, before Shri Govardhannathji, Kumbhandasji was singing a pada. As Shri Govardhandhar was the embodiment of beauty surpassing millions of Cupids, so too was the rasa-filled singing of Kumbhandas — charming and full of divine sweetness. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग नट -

रूप दे ख नैनां पलक लगे नहीं। गोवद्धनघर के अंग अंग प्र त नर ख नैन मन रहत तहीं ॥१॥

कहा री कहों कछु कहत न आवे चत्त चोरयो वे मांग दहीं। 'कुंभनदास' प्रभु के म लवेकी सुंदर बात स खयन सों जु

कही ॥ २॥

Raag Nat

Seeing His form, the eyelids do not blink. The eyes and mind remain fixed, gazing upon

each and every limb of Govardhan-dhar. □1□

What shall I say, O friend? Words do not come — He has stolen my mind by merely

asking for curd. 'Kumbhandas' says — this beautiful matter of meeting the Lord

Was told only to the friends. □2□

राग नट-

पूतरी पो रया इनके भएरी माई। को रोके या मग आवत खंजन छो र दए पलक न कपाट दये री माई ॥ १॥

ठाढे रहत प्रेम के बाढ़े नसबासर सब सुख चतए री माई। 'कुंभनदास' लाल ग रधरन मन के भाजन फो र ढो र लये

री माई॥२॥

Raag Nat

These children have become their mother’s torment, O mother! Who can stop them on

this path? Leaving the khanjan-bird (restless eyes), they do not even close their eyelids, O

mother! □1□

Standing there, absorbed in love, spending the whole day and night looking only for

delight, O mother. ‘Kumbhandas’ says — Lal Giridhar, the thief of the mind, breaks pots

and takes away the curd, O mother! □2□

राग श्रीराग -

आवत ग रधर मन जू हरयो हो। हो अपने घर स सो बैठी नर ख वदन अचरा बसरयो हो ॥। १॥

रूप नधान र सक नंदनंदन नर ख नैन धीरज न धरचो हो 'कुंभनदास' प्रभु गोवद्धनधर अंग अंग प्रेम पीयूष भरयो

हो ॥ २॥

Raag Nat

As Giridhar comes, he steals away the mind. Sitting at her own home, watching His face,

She forgets even her veil. □1□

Seeing Nandanandan, the treasure of beauty and sweetness, her eyes cannot hold steady.

‘Kumbhandas’ says — the Lord of Govardhan has filled every limb with the nectar of

love. □2□

✿✿✿

Thus, Kumbhandasji sang such beautiful padas. After that, the time for Bhog (food offering) was completed, and the curtains were drawn.

Then Raja Maan Singh bowed down with full prostration before Shri Govardhannathji and returned to his camp. Later, at the time of the evening ārti, Kumbhandasji sang this pada. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग केदारो -

लाल के बदन पर आरती वारों ॥ चारु चतव न करों साज नीकी युिक्तबाती अग नत घृत कपूर सो बारों ॥१॥

संख धु न मे र - मृदंग झालर झाँझ ताल घंटा बाजे बहुत वस्तारों। गाऊं सामल सुजस रसना सुखस्वाद रस परम

हरख तन चमर कर डारों ॥२॥

को ट उद्योत र वकां त अंग अंग छ ब सकल भूलोक को त मर टारों ॥ 'दासकुभन' पय लाल ग रधरन को रूप

दे ख नयनन भ र भ र नहारों ॥३॥

Raag Kedaro (केदारो) –

I perform ārti over Lal's face. With beautiful sidelong glances I adorn Him; Using

countless lamps with ghee and camphor I wave the flame. □1□

The sound of the conch, the mridang drum, The jhālar, the cymbals, and the bells. All

resound in great abundance. I sing the glories of Shyam; The tongue tastes the supreme

sweetness of that nectar, and in great joy I wave the yak-tail fan over His body. □2□

The radiance of a crore suns shines from every limb, driving away all the darkness of the whole world. 'Das Kumbhan' says — seeing the form of my beloved Lal Giridhar, My eyes

drink it in again and again. □3□

✿✿✿

In this way, after singing the kirtans filled with love, and completing his service, Kumbhandasji returned home to Jamunavata. Meanwhile,

Raja Maan Singh went back to his camp and began telling his men about the beautiful service and adornment he had witnessed of Shri Govardhannathji. He said, “Before Shri Govardhannathji, someone was singing a Vishnu-pada. Who was that? The padas he sang entered straight into my heart. Never in my life have I heard such padas before.”

Then one Brajwasi said, “He is a Gorva by caste, and his name is Kumbhandasji. He lives by cultivating his fields. You must have already heard about him — earlier, when the ruler had summoned him, Kumbhandasji went but accepted nothing from him. He is a true mahapurush (great soul).” Raja Maan Singh said, “It is already night now; therefore, I will meet him in the morning.”

In the morning, Raja Maan Singh rose and began circumambulating Shri Giriraj. He came to Parasoli, where the Chandrasarovar is. There, Kumbhandasji had bathed and was sitting in his field. At that very moment, Shri Govardhannathji Himself came to Kumbhandasji. As soon as Kumbhandas saw the divine face of Shri Nathji, he said, “Baba! Come forward.” Then Shri Nathji Himself sat in the lap of Kumbhandasji and said, “Kumbhandas! I have come to tell you something.”

While Shri Nathji was speaking thus, Raja Maan Singh arrived before Kumbhandas. Immediately, Shri Govardhannathji, fearing disturbance, hid Himself behind a nearby tree. At that time, Kumbhandas’s sight had gone with Shri Govardhannathji, so his gaze was fixed in that direction where the Lord stood behind the tree. Raja Maan Singh came near and offered his salutations, sitting beside Kumbhandas, but Kumbhandas did not even look toward him.

Kumbhandasji had a niece. From Jamunavata, she was bringing lime in a small bowl (kathoti) for preparing the meal. On the way, a Brajwasi said to her, “Go quickly. Raja is sitting with Kumbhandasji; if he gives anything, you take it, because Kumbhandasji himself will not even touch it.” So the niece hurried and came to where Kumbhandasji was sitting. Seeing toward the tree, Kumbhandas said, “Baba! The king is sitting here; please make him satisfied with something.”

Then Kumbhandas said, “What can I do if he sits here? The one who was speaking with me has gone away. Now, will he speak again or not?” Then Shri Govardhannathji Himself, from the temple, said to Kumbhandas, “I am very pleased with you. Whatever I wish to say, I will say. Do not worry.” Hearing this, Kumbhandas’s mind became calm. No one, not even Raja Maan Singh or anyone else, could know

the conversation between Kumbhandasji and Shri Govardhannathji.

Then Kumbhandasji said to his niece, “Daughter! Bring the mat and the bowl of water so that I may make my tilak.” The niece replied, “Baba! The mat has been eaten by the buffalo, and the water bowl has been drunk dry.” Kumbhandas said, “Then fetch another bowl of water; that will do.”

Hearing this, Raja Man Singh thought to himself, “The mat was eaten and the bowl was drunk from! What kind of poverty is this?” In the meantime, the niece brought a bundle of grass and a bowl filled with water. She spread the grass as a seat, and Kumbhandas sat upon it, using the water in the bowl as a mirror to see his reflection and apply his tilak.

Then Raja Maan Singh thought, “Kumbhandasji is so detached that even for a simple mat and mirror he feels hesitation.” Seeing his renunciation, Raja Man Singh called a man from his household and said, “Bring a mirror set in gold.” Soon a golden mirror inlaid with gems was brought and placed before Kumbhandas. Raja Man Singh said, “Baba Sahib! Please see your reflection in this mirror and apply your tilak.”

Kumbhandas replied, “O brother! Where would I even keep this? I live in a thatched hut. If such a thing were in my house, someone would steal my life for it. Therefore, I do not want it.” Then Raja Maan Singh thought to himself, “If he takes this mirror, what will he do with it? He will never sell it. Better I give him something useful, by which he can live his whole life.” So he placed before Kumbhandas a bag containing a thousand gold coins. Kumbhandas said, “This is of no use to me. I have my fields; whatever grain grows, that I eat. I need nothing else.” Then Raja Maan Singh said, “Your village, Jamunavata, I will grant it to you in writing.” Kumbhandas replied, “I am not a Brahmin to take water from your hands. If you wish to give something, give it to some Brahmin; I want nothing of yours.”

Then Raja Maan Singh said, “At least tell me your grocer (modi), so that I may give it to him, and you can take supplies from him as needed.” Kumbhandas replied, “As I am, so is my grocer.” Raja Man Singh said, “Tell me, so I may give it to him.” Kumbhandas pointed to a karil tree and a ber tree and said, “In the summer season, my grocer is the karil tree — it gives flowers and pods. In the cold season, my grocer is the ber tree — it gives plenty of berries. Thus my needs are met.”

Then Raja Man Singh said, “Blessed indeed! Those whose trees are their grocers — such a one I have never seen before. I have seen many great renunciants and ascetics, but this householder is the truest renunciate of all. Such a person does not exist elsewhere on this earth.” Then Raja Maan Singh bowed down before Kumbhandasji and said, “Baba Sahib! Please command me to do something.” Kumbhandas said, “Will you do what I say?”

Raja Maan Singh replied, “Whatever you command, I shall consider it my highest fortune and will surely do it.” Kumbhandas said, “Then from today onward, never come to me again, and do not speak to me of anything.” Raja Maan Singh bowed down and said, “You are truly blessed. I have traveled all over the world and seen countless devotees of wealth, but a true devotee of Shri Thakurji like you I have seen only today.” Saying this, Raja Maan Singh departed.

Afterwards, the niece came near and said to Kumbhandasji, “There was nothing in the house. Why did you not take what the king was giving?” Kumbhandas said, “Sit down, foolish girl! If Shri Govardhannathji hears of this, He will be displeased, saying, ‘Kumbhandas’s niece is greedy.’” The niece said, “I was only joking! I do not want anything.” Kumbhandas said, “Daughter! Never even in jest should one speak of taking anything from anyone.”

Then Shri Govardhannathji came, sat in Kumbhandasji’s lap, and said, “Why have you become like this in a moment? What is in your mind? Tell Me.” Then Kumbhandasji sang this pada. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग सारंग-

परम भावते ि◌जयके मोहन नैनन तें म त टो । जो लो जीऊं तो लो देखो बार बार पाइ लागों चत्त अनत न धरों ॥१॥

तब सुख चंतत तो ह लो ले ले अंग भरों। र सकन मांझ र सक- नंदनंदन तुम पय मेरे सकल दुःख हरो ॥२॥

आवहु सदा रहो घर मेरे स्याम मनोहर संग कन करो ? 'कुभनदास' प्रभु गोवद्धनधर तुम बनु अंजन कासों करों

॥३॥

Raag Sarang (सारंग) –

O Mohan, supreme beloved of my heart, my mind is stolen by Your

eyes. If I must live,

then let me live only to behold You — Again and again I bow at Your feet; My mind will

not settle anywhere else. □1□

Then, thinking of that joy, take me fully into Your embrace. Among all the rasiks, You —

Nandanandan — are the crown of rasikas; O my beloved, remove all my sorrows. □2□

Come, and always remain in my home — O Shyam Manohar, why delay? 'Kumbhandas'

says — O Lord Govardhan-dhar, without You, with what other collyrium could I anoint

my eyes? □3□

✿✿✿

Hearing this kirtan, Shri Govardhannathji embraced Kumbhandasji around the neck and said, "Kumbhandas! I have come to tell you something." Kumbhandasji replied, "Please say it! That time, when You were about to speak, the unfortunate king arrived, and You left in haste. Since then, my mind has remained fixed upon that incomplete matter. Out of Your grace, please tell me now what You wished to say then."

Then Shri Govardhannathji said to Kumbhandas, "Kumbhandas! Today there is a friendly contest among the sakhis — each one is preparing a meal in her own home, and it will be seen whose preparation is the most delightful. Would you also like to make an offering for this occasion? That is why I have come to tell you this." Kumbhandasji asked, "What is your preference?" Shri Govardhannathji said, "Make some porridge of barley flour (jwar ki maheri), curd, milk, flatbread of bejhari grain, and curry of tender tamarind pods (tenti ka saag)."

Kumbhandasji said, "All these things are ready at home." Shri Govardhannathji said, "Then quickly have them brought." So Kumbhandasji said to his niece, "Go home and bring barley flour, tamarind-pod curry, curd, and milk at once." The niece said, "I have already brought the barley flour, the tamarind curry, and the curd, but

the milk is still warm and being set for curdling." Then Kumbhandasji said, "Do not set the milk for curd today. Bring the pot of milk and the barley grain itself here; I will prepare the food here." After bathing, Kumbhandasji sat and began cooking. He added salt and prepared flatbreads of bejhari grain on an earthen plate.

Meanwhile, the niece went to Jamunavata village, brought the barley grain and the pot of milk. Then Kumbhandasji poured water into the pot and cooked the barley mixture properly. Just then, from the sakhis' side, the food platters were brought, and Kumbhandas's offering was also placed before Shri Govardhannathji. Afterwards, the Lord tasted all the offerings from each house — and finally ate the food prepared by Kumbhandas himself.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Vishakhaji (whose earthly manifestation is Kumbhandasji) mixed sugar candy into the milk and offered it to Shri Swaminiji, making it extraordinarily sweet. When Shri Thakurji tasted Kumbhandasji's preparation, He found it supremely delicious. At that time, Kumbhandasji sang a kirtan. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग सारंग-

ब्रज में बड़ो मेवा यह टेंटी। जाकौ होत है साग संधानो और बेजर की रोटौ ।१॥

ले ले ड लया बीनन नकसी बड़े गोप की बेटी। 'कुंभनदास" लाल ग रधर सो व्हे गई भेटा भेटी ॥ २॥

Raag Sarang

In Braj, this tenti fruit is a great delicacy. From it is prepared a vegetable dish, and with it

is made the bejar bread. □1□

Taking a basket and picking them, the daughter of a great cowherd came out.

'Kumbhandas' says — there she met with Lal Giridhar, and that meeting became a sweet

encounter. □2□

राग सारंग-

घर घर तें आई है छाक। खाटे मीठे और सलोने व वध भां त के पाक ॥१॥

मंडल रचना करी जमुना तट सघन लता की छां ह। गोपी- ग्वाल सकल म ल जमत मुख ह सराहत जा ह ॥ २॥

बांटत बल मोहन दोउ भैया कर दोना अ त सोहे। चाखत आपुन सखन मुखन दे के गोपीजन मन मोहे ॥३॥

टेंटी, साग, संघानो रोटी,गोरस सरस महेरी। 'कुंभनदास' ग रधर रस-लंपट नाचत देदे फेरी ॥४॥

Raag Sarang

From every house, the meal has arrived — Sour, sweet, and savory dishes of many

different kinds. ।1।

A circle was arranged on the bank of the Yamuna, under the dense shade of vines.

Gopis and Gopas all together eat, praising the taste with their mouths. ।2।

Distributing with strength, Mohan and both brothers, holding leaf-bowls, look

exceedingly beautiful. Tasting some himself and giving some to the mouths of his

friends, he enchants the hearts of the Gopi-people. ।3।

Tenti, saag, sandhano roti, fresh milk, sweet cream — 'Kumbhandas' says — Giridhar,

greedy for rasa, dances around giving out portions. ।4।

Filled with immense joy, Kumbhandasji sang that kirtan, saying in his heart, "Shri Govardhannathji has spoken such a wonderful thing — through it, I have directly experienced His divine Leela." In this way, Shri Govardhannathji continued to shower His grace upon Kumbhandasji. That day, Kumbhandasji became deeply absorbed in the bliss of rasa. By evening, when awareness of his body returned, he suddenly thought, "Today, I have not yet had the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji!"

With longing and restlessness in his heart, he ran swiftly from Parasoli, thinking only of his Beloved. When he reached the temple, the time of the Bhog offering was ending. The feeling of separation (viraha) surged in his heart — "When will I behold the Lord's face again?" Just then, the temple doors opened for the evening (sandhya) darshan. Seeing Shri Govardhannathji, Kumbhandasji fixed his gaze steadily upon Him and sang this kirtan. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग बहाग -

लोचन म ल गए जब चारयो। हो व्हे रही ठगी सी ठाढी उर अचरा न सवारयो ॥ १॥

अपने सुभाई नंद जू के आइ सुन्दर स्याम नहाय । इक टक लगी चरन ग त थाकी क्यों हू टरत नहीं टारयों ॥२॥

उपजी प्री त मदन मोहन सों गृह को काज बसरयो । 'कुंभनदास' ग रधर रस लोभी भलो आरज पंथ पारयो ॥३॥

Raag Bihag When their eyes met together, she stood as if stunned, her heart unable to adjust her veil.

□1□

By her own nature she came to Nandji's home, gazing at the beautiful Shyam. Her gaze

fixed unmoving, her steps grew tired, yet she could not turn away. □ 2□

Love arose for Madan Mohan, she forgot all the household duties. 'Kumbhandas' says —

Giridhar, greedy for rasa, rightfully carried her across the path. □3□

राग बहागरो -

नंदनंदन की ब ल जैये। सांवल मृदुल कलेवर की छ ब दे ख दे ख सुख पैये ॥१॥

सकल लोकप त ठाकुर रसना र सक वमल जस गैये । 'कुंभनदास प्रभु' ग रधर को तन मन सवस्व दैये ॥।२॥

Raag Bihagro

I offer myself to Nandanandan. seeing again and again the beauty of His dark, soft form,

I find joy. □1□

Lord of all worlds is the Thakur, let the tongue sing His pure and delightful glory.

'Kumbhandas Prabhu' offers body and mind and all to Giridhar. □2□

राग केदारो -

छनु छनु बा नक और ही और । जब दैखों तब नौतन सखीरी दिृष्ट न रहे इकठौर ॥१॥

कहा कहों पर मत नहीं पावत बोहोत करों चत दौर। 'कुंभनदास प्रभु' सौभग सींवा ग रधर र सकराय सर मोर ॥२॥

Raag Kedaro

Every moment His manner is new and new. Whenever I look, O friend, His sight does not

stay in one place. □1□

What shall I say, no measure is found, the mind runs in many directions. 'Kumbhandas

Prabhu' says — fortunate is the service, Giridhar, king of rasikas, with a peacock plume

upon His head. □2□

✿✿✿

In this way, Kumbhandas sang many kirtans filled with divine rasa. Such was Kumbhandasji — a blessed devotee, the true recipient of Shri Thakurji's boundless grace.

Prasang 5 – The Saints of Vrindavan Visit Kumbhandas

Once, the saints and mahants of Vrindavan came to Shri Giriraj to meet Kumbhandasji. They came because it was said, "Shri Thakurji speaks directly with him." They had also heard that Kumbhandasji had sung songs celebrating Shri Swaminiji's glory. They wished to meet him and ask, "We too have composed descriptions of Shri Swaminiji. Let us see how Kumbhandasji describes her." Thinking thus, saints such as Harivansh and Haridas Swami came and met Kumbhandasji.

They asked him, "Kumbhandasji, you have sung many kirtans about the Divine Couple (Yugal Swaroop). We have heard many of your compositions, but we have not yet heard any kirtan describing Shri Swaminiji alone. Out of your grace, please sing a pada in praise of Shri Swaminiji." Then Kumbhandasji composed and sang before them a pada describing Shri Swaminiji. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग रामकली -

कुँव र रा धके तुव सकल सौभाग्य सींवा या बदन पर को ट सत चंद वा र डारों। खंजन कुरंग सत को ट नैनन उपर

वारने करत िजयमें बचारों ॥१॥

कदली सत को ट जंघन ऊपर संघ सत को ट क ट पर न्योछावर क र उतारों। मत्त गज को ट सत चाल पर कुंभ सत

को ट इन कुचन पर वा र डारों ॥२॥

कीर सत को ट ना सका ऊपर कुंद सत को ट दसनन ऊपर काहे न वारों ? पक्व कंदूर बंधूक सत को ट अधरन ऊपर

वा र रु च गव टारों ॥३॥

नाग सत को ट बेनी ऊपर कपोत सत को ट ग्रीवा दू र सारों। कमल सत को ट कर-जुगल पर वारने ना हन कोऊ

उपमा जु धारों ॥४॥

´दासकुंभन' स्वा मनी सुनख-सख अद्भुत सुठान कहां लो संभारों। लाल ग रधर कहत मो ह तो ह लो सुख जो लोये

रूप छनु छनु नहारों ॥५॥

Raag Ramkali

Princess Radhike, all good fortune is placed in Your service, upon this face I would wave away a crore times the essence of a hundred moons; thinking in my heart, I wave away a

hundred crores of khanjan and deer-like eyes upon Your eyes. □1□

Upon Your thighs I offer a hundred crores of plantain trees, upon Your waist I offer and

remove a hundred crores of lions; upon Your gait I wave away a hundred crores of

intoxicated elephants, and upon these breasts I wave away a hundred crores of kumbh.

□2□

Upon Your nose I wave away a hundred crores of parrots, upon Your

teeth a hundred

crores of jasmine flowers, why should I not? upon Your lips I wave away a hundred crores

of ripe sindoor and bandhuk flowers, removing all pride in beauty. 3

Upon Your braided hair I wave away a hundred crores of serpents, and upon Your neck a

hundred crores of doves, removing all distance; upon Your pair of lotus-like hands I wave

away a hundred crores of lotuses, for no comparison can be held for them. 4

‘Das Kumbhan’ says — O mistress, where shall I gather such wondrous perfections?

Lal Giridhar tells me, “if you desire joy, then behold Her form every moment.” 5

✿✿✿

Hearing this pada sung by Kumbhandasji, the saints and mahants of Shri Vrindavan became greatly pleased. They said, “We have composed many verses describing Shri Swaminiji, in which we have often compared Her beauty to the moon and other shining forms. But, Kumbhandas! You have surpassed hundreds of millions of moons with your words. In your description, no one in this world seems worthy of being compared to Shri Swaminiji. You have portrayed Her wondrous, incomparable form in a way that is beyond all comparison.”

After this, the saints took leave of Kumbhandasji and returned to Vrindavan. Kumbhandasji remained ever absorbed in the tender mood of youthful divine love (kishor bhavana) and the blissful nectar of divine pastimes (leela-rasa). Such was Kumbhandasji — a true devotee, ever-graced and beloved of the Lord.

Prasang 6 – Shri Gusainji Invites Kumbhandas to Dwarka

Once, Shri Gusainji, after taking leave from Shri Navneetpriyaji in Shri Gokul, decided to go to Shri Dwarika — a journey undertaken for the

divine purpose of uplifting the celestial beings dwelling there. From Gokul, Shri Gusainji came to Shri Nathdwara and personally performed the seva and adornment of Shri Govardhannathji. After completing the daily rituals and taking His meal, Shri Gusainji sat on his seat upon a cushion and pillow, surrounded by many Vaishnavas.

During the course of conversation, the topic of Kumbhandasji arose. One Vaishnav said before Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! These days there is great scarcity of wealth in Kumbhandasji’s home. He has a large family — seven sons, and each of those sons has a wife. Along with that, there is himself, his wife, and a niece. Despite this, he always welcomes and serves visiting Vaishnavas. His income, however, is small — he sustains his household from the little harvest of his field in Parasoli, surviving mostly on the flowers and pods of the tamarind tree.”

Hearing this, Shri Gusainji kept it in His heart. Later, when Kumbhandasji came for the darshan of Shri Gusainji, he bowed down and stood before Him. Shri Gusainji said, “Kumbhandasji, please sit.” When Kumbhandasji had sat down, Shri Gusainji dismissed the other Vaishnavas and spoke to him privately:

“Kumbhandasji! I am going to the distant land of Shri Dwarika. There, I shall meet many Vaishnavas. You must know that they have written many letters begging me to visit. You should come with me. Your company will help relieve the pain of separation felt by the devotees, and your presence will be a source of great joy and divine benefit. I have also heard that your household is facing scarcity of resources — this journey will bring about its remedy. Therefore, you should surely accompany me.”

Then Kumbhandasji humbly said to Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! In Your presence, I am unable to speak much. Whatever You command, that alone I shall do.” Meanwhile, it became time for the Utthapan darshan. Shri Gusainji bathed, performed the awakening (Utthapan) of Shri Govardhannathji, completed the service up to the midday offering (Seva till Bhog), and then returned to His seat.

He then said to Kumbhandasji, “Now go home, and tomorrow morning, after taking leave from your household, come back. After the Rajbhog and Ārti, we shall depart for the journey.” Accordingly, Kumbhandasji bowed to Shri Gusainji and returned to his home in Jamunavata.

The next morning, he came again to Shri Gusainji. Shri Gusainji had

already bathed and gone up the hill to awaken Shri Nathji. After completing the adornment and offering of the Rajbhog, performing the Ārti, and taking leave from Shri Govardhannathji, Shri Gusainji descended from the hill. Their tents were set up beforehand near Apsarakund. Shri Gusainji said, “Now we shall stay tonight at the camp near Apsarakund.”

All the Vaishnavas, along with Kumbhandasji, came there. Then Kumbhandasji began to reflect within himself: “O my mind! What shall I do now? What can be said, and to whom shall I speak? No one knows the pain of separation from my Beloved Lord.” Thinking thus, the fire of separation from Shri Govardhannathji grew intensely in his heart.

That night, Shri Gusainji awoke within the camp. When it became time for Utthapan (the morning awakening), Kumbhandasji remembered the darshan of Shri Nathji, and tears began to flow from his eyes, his whole body trembled with divine emotion, and his hairs stood on end. Then, standing quietly under a nearby tree near the camp, Kumbhandasji began to sing slowly, his voice filled with divine longing. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

कते दन व्हे जुगए बनु देखे। तरून कसोर र सक नंदनंदन कछुक उठत मुखरेखे ॥१॥

यह सोभा वह कां त बदन की को टक चंद बसेखे। वह चतव न वह हारय मनोहर वह नटवर वपु भेखे ॥२॥

स्यामसुंदर संग म ल खेलन की आवत िजय अपेखें। कुंभनदास लाल ग रधर बनु जीवन जन्म अलेखे ॥३॥

Raag Sarang -

Many days have passed, seeming like ages without seeing Him. The young Kishor, the

rasik Nandanandan, a few lines rise in memory of His face. □1□

That beauty, that radiance of His face, surpassing crores of moons. that glance, that

charming necklace, that natvar form and attire. □2□

The heart waits for the moment to play together with Shyamsundar. Kumbhandas says

— without Lal Giridhar, life and birth are without meaning. □3□

✿✿✿

Kumbhandasji sang this kirtan in deep anguish of separation. Shri Gusainji, seated within His tent, listened to the entire kirtan of Kumbhandasji. The depth of Kumbhandasji's pain was so great that Shri Gusainji Himself could not bear it. He came out from His tent and saw Kumbhandasji's state — tears flowing continuously from his eyes, his body trembling, utterly distressed in the agony of divine separation. Then Shri Gusainji, with compassion, said from His own mouth, "Kumbhandas! Go into the temple and have the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. Your time of separation has now ended."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why was this said? Because just as Kumbhandasji's condition was here, so too was the condition of Shri Govardhannathji there.

How can this be understood? It is like when Shri Akkaji once sent Gajan, the sevak, to fetch betel leaves (pān). Gajan could not bear even a moment's separation from Shri Navneetpriyaji. As soon as he stepped out of the temple door to fetch the pān, he was seized by the fever of separation and fainted near the shop by the gate. Meanwhile, in the temple, Shri Acharyaji offered the Rajbhog to Shri Navneetpriyaji. But Shri Navneetpriyaji said to Mahaprabhu, "I will eat only when My Gajan returns."

Then Shri Acharyaji asked everyone, "Where has Gajan gone?" Akkaji said, "There were no betel leaves, so I sent Gajan to get some." Shri Acharyaji said, "Do you not know that Gajan cannot remain even for a moment away from Shri Navneetpriyaji? Why did you send him?" Then Shri Acharyaji sent a Brajwasi to call for Gajan. They brought Gajan back, and as soon as he came before Shri Navneetpriyaji and said, 'Baba, please eat,' Shri Navneetpriyaji accepted the offering.

Thus, Gajan too sat in divine separation. This is the sacred tradition of Shri Acharyaji's path: when a sevak's heart is completely one with his Lord, the Lord likewise feels the same intense love toward that sevak. Therefore, Shri Bhagwan also said to Arjuna —

✿✿✿

'ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम ्।'

They approach me in whatever manner, in that same manner I honor and respond to

them.

✿✿✿

Then Shri Gusainji Himself said to Kumbhandasji, “Just as you are here suffering in the pain of separation from Shri Govardhannathji, in the same way, Shri Govardhannathji there is feeling the pain of separation from you. Therefore, go quickly and have His darshan — your time of separation has come to an end.” In this way, Shri Gusainji gave His command to Kumbhandasji.

At those words, Kumbhandasji’s entire body became cool and calm; his heart overflowed with joy. Bowing deeply before Shri Gusainji, he immediately ran from Apsarakund toward the temple of Shri Govardhannathji. At that very moment, it was the time for Utthapan darshan, and the temple doors were opened. Then Kumbhandasji sang this verse:

✿✿✿

राग नट -

जोपेंचोप मलन की होई। तो क्यों रह्यो परे सु न सजनी लाख करे कन कोई ॥ १॥

जोपे वरह परस्पर व्यापे तो कछु जीय बने। लोक लाज कुल की मयादा ऐको चत्त न गने ॥ २॥

'कुंभनदास' िज हं तन लागी और कछु न सुहाय। ग धरलाल तोय बनु देखे छन छन कल्प वहाय ॥३॥॥

Raag Nat

If even a little meeting were possible, then why should one remain apart, listen friend,

even if one must make a hundred efforts. □1□

If even a small touch of mutual separation spreads through the heart, then nothing else

remains bearable; The shame of the world and the limits of family tradition,

not even one of these stays in the mind. □2□

‘Kumbhandas’ says — to the body in which this love has entered, nothing else seems

pleasing. O Giridhar Lal, without seeing You, each and every moment passes like an age.

□3□

✿✿✿

Hearing this pada, Shri Govardhannathji became very pleased and said to Kumbhandas, “Kumbhandas! I know what is in your heart — you cannot live without Me, and in the same way, I too cannot live without you. Therefore, from now on, you shall always remain near Me.” Kumbhandasji, overjoyed, bowed to the ground with full prostration and, with folded hands, said, “Maharaj! This is all I ever desired — this was my only wish, that I may never be separated from You.” Thus, Kumbhandasji was a most blessed devotee, the true recipient of divine grace.

Prasang 7 – The Measure of True Sons

Once, Kumbhandasji was sitting with Shri Gusainji, along with many other Vaishnavas. Shri Gusainji, smiling, asked, “Kumbhandas! How many sons do you have?” Kumbhandasji replied, “Maharaj! I have one and a half sons.” Shri Gusainji said, “We have heard that you have seven sons, yet you call them only one and a half — why is that?”

Kumbhandasji replied, “Maharaj! Yes, I have seven sons, but five of them are worldly-minded — they are attached to worldly desires, so how can they be called true sons? Only one son, Chaturbhujdas, is complete, and the other, Krishnadas, is half a son. Krishnadas serves in the kirtan seva of Shri Govardhannathji.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here a doubt may arise — “Kirtan seva is supreme, and many Vaishnavas have attained Shri Thakurji through it. Then why does Kumbhandasji call Krishnadas only a half-son?”

To this it is said: Shri Acharyaji revealed the Pushti Marg — a path of loving devotion born of the moods (bhava) of the Braj devotees. The Braj bhaktas sing — “Seva, rīti, and prīti of the Braj people have been revealed to the world for the welfare of all.”

What is the way of the Braj devotees? When serving Shri Thakurji

directly in His presence, they experience the bliss of union (sanyog rasa). When Shri Thakurji goes out for cowherding in Braj, they sing in the feeling of separation (viprayog rasa). One who experiences both the rasa of union and of separation is a complete devotee. But one who knows only one of these moods is only a half-devotee.

Krishnadas performs the seva of singing kirtan and has darshan of Shri Govardhannathji, but he does not yet experience the deep mysteries of the divine lila of the Braj devotees. Hence, he is "half." But Chaturbhujdas experiences both the joy of union and the sweetness of separation — his seva and his songs are fully connected with the Lord's lila. Therefore, Kumbhandasji called Chaturbhujdas a complete son.

Hearing these words, Shri Gusainji smiled and said joyfully, "Kumbhandas! You have spoken truly — only he who is devoted to Bhagavan is a real son. What use are many others? One true son like this is enough." The story of Chaturbhujdas is recorded among the servants of Shri Gusainji. Now, the story of Krishnadas is told.

Prasang 8 – Krishnadas, the Cowherd Singer

This Krishnadas served Shri Govardhannathji in the kirtan seva — he was a cowherd singer (gwal). Shri Gusainji Himself had appointed him to this service. Every day, after completing the cleaning of the cowshed, he would join the cowherds and go to the forest with the cows, spending the whole day grazing them. In the evening, he would bring the herd back home.

One day, while returning with the cows, he reached near Puchhri. All the cows went ahead into the cowshed, but there was one large cow who was very heavy with milk. She walked slowly, her udder full. As Krishnadas walked behind her near a cave at the base of Giriraj, a lion suddenly appeared. The whole herd ran quickly into the cowshed, but the slow cow was attacked by the lion.

Krishnadas shouted, "O wicked one! This cow belongs to Shri Govardhannathji! If you are hungry, come toward me instead!" Now, it is the lion's nature to attack the one who challenges him. So the lion turned toward Krishnadas. Krishnadas quickly urged the cow forward, and she ran into the cowshed safely. But the lion pounced on Krishnadas and killed him.

When the herd returned, Gopinath and the other cowherds began milking the cows. Gopinath, a most blessed devotee, saw a divine

vision — Shri Govardhannathji Himself was milking that same great cow, and Krishnadas stood beside Him, holding the calf, while Kumbhandasji too was standing nearby. The cow was licking her calf lovingly. This divine sight was revealed to Gopinath in the cowshed. After finishing the milking, Shri Govardhannathji returned to the temple. Shri Gusainji completed the evening seva, offering bhog to Shri Nathji.

Meanwhile, Kumbhandasji came from the cowshed to the temple, reaching near the Dandvati rock. There he heard the news: “A lion has killed your son Krishnadas, the cowherd.” Hearing this, Kumbhandasji fainted and fell to the ground, losing all bodily awareness. The Braj Vaishnavas tried calling him repeatedly, but he did not respond. The news reached Shri Gusainji: “Maharaj! Krishnadas Gwal, the son of Kumbhandas, was killed by a lion while saving Shri Govardhannathji’s cow. His body lies near Puchhri.” Shri Gusainji said, “Do not say so — the cow would never leave Krishnadas.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): It is said that when a cow remembers someone at her last moment, she carries that soul to higher realms. And Krishnadas had saved the cow of Shri Govardhannathji — such a cow would never leave him. Shri Gusainji then asked, “Where is Kumbhandas?” A Vaishnav replied, “Maharaj! Kumbhandas is deeply overcome by grief for his son. He lies unconscious near the Dandvati stone. Many are calling him, but he does not respond.”

Then Shri Gusainji, after completing Shri Nathji’s seva and closing the temple, descended the hill and came to where Kumbhandas lay. The Vaishnavas told Him everything. When Shri Gusainji saw Kumbhandas lying there, surrounded by people, some said, “Maharaj! Though Kumbhandas is a great devotee, the sorrow of a son’s death is unbearable — no one can escape such pain.”

Shri Gusainji said, “He does not grieve for his son; his sorrow is of another kind — you do not understand. His pain is that, being in mourning (sūtaka), how can he have darshan of Shri Nathji? It is from that sorrow that he has fallen.” “To clear your doubt,” said Shri Gusainji, “I shall now reveal the true nature of this devotee.”

Calling to him, Shri Gusainji said, “Kumbhandas! Come tomorrow morning for Shri Nathji’s darshan. Shri Govardhannathji Himself will give you His sight.” Hearing these words, Kumbhandas immediately rose, bowed to the ground before Shri Gusainji, and said humbly, “Maharaj! Who but You could know what is in my heart?”

Shri Gusainji said, “I know. You are untouched by worldly sorrow. Even one who spends a moment in your company will not be touched by worldly grief — so how could you be? Now go and perform the rites for Krishnadas’s body, and come again in the morning for darshan.” Kumbhandas bowed and went to complete the funeral rites for Krishnadas. Shri Gusainji then returned to His seat, where all the Vaishnavas gathered around Him.

Just then, Gopinathdas Gwal arrived and said, “Maharaj! The lion indeed attacked Krishnadas near Puchhri, but while I was milking the cows in the shed, I saw Shri Govardhannathji Himself milking that same cow, and Krishnadas stood beside Him, holding the calf. The cow was licking her calf affectionately — this I witnessed with my own eyes.”

Shri Gusainji said, “Why be surprised? Krishnadas was a true devotee. He offered himself to save Shri Govardhannathji’s cow. Out of grace, Shri Govardhannathji has taken him into His own divine lila. You, being a devotee, were allowed that vision — such divine sights are rare indeed.” Hearing this, all the Vaishnavas and Braj dwellers were filled with joy and said, “Such is the reward of true seva!”

The next morning, Kumbhandasji came for the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. Shri Gusainji instructed the sevaks, “First grant darshan to Kumbhandasji, and only afterwards to everyone else.” Thus, Shri Gusainji gave Kumbhandasji the first darshan of the day. In this way, Shri Gusainji showed his deep compassion toward Kumbhandasji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Ordinarily, one in mourning (sūtaka) is not permitted into the temple. But Shri Gusainji allowed Kumbhandas to have darshan even during sūtaka. From that day forward, this became the tradition — that even one in mourning may have darshan.

This rule was established out of the grace of Kumbhandasji. Because the love in a Vaishnav’s heart is beyond worldly impurity, none should be denied the Lord’s sight for such reasons. By this, both the Vaishnav and Shri Govardhannathji experience joy. Therefore, since that day, darshan has remained open for all. Kumbhandasji, after having darshan up to the time of Bhog, returned to Parasoli, singing songs of divine longing. The verse is:

✿✿✿

राग बहागरो -

तहारे मलन बनु दु खत गोपाल। अ त आतुर कुलबधू ब्रज-सुंद र प्यारे-वरह बेहाल ॥१॥

सीतल चंद तपत दहत करन न कमलपत्र जल-जनु ब्याल। चंदन कुसुम सुहाय न बाढी है तन ज्वाल। 'कुंभनदास'

नव तन स्याम तुम बनु कनकलता सूकी मानों ग्रीष्ण काल ॥२॥

Raag Bihagro

Without Your meeting, Gopal is sorrowful. The noble women of Braj, the beautiful

beloved ones, are extremely restless, overwhelmed by separation. □1□

The cool moon burns with scorching rays, the lotus leaf feels like a serpent filled with

fire. Sandalwood and flowers do not soothe, the body's flame does not lessen.

'Kumbhandas' says — without You, O new-bodied Shyam, the golden vine has withered

as if in the heat of summer. □2□

राग बहागरो -

अब दनरात पहारसे भए। तब तें नघटत ना हन जब ते ह र मधुपुरी गए ॥ १॥

यह जा नयत बधाता जुग सम कीने जाम नए। जागत जात बहात न क्यों हू ऐसे मीत ठए ॥२॥

बजबासी सब परम दीन अ त व्याकुल सोच लए। ज्यों बनु प्रान दु खत जलरुह गन दारुन हदे हए ॥३॥

'कुंभनदास' बछ र नंदनंदन बहु संताप दए। अब ग रधर बनु रहत नरंतर लोचन नीर छए ॥४॥

Raag Bihagro

Now day and night have become like mountains. From the moment Hari went to

Madhupuri, they do not pass at all. □1□

Knowing this, the Creator made each moment feel like an age. Why do waking, going,

and passing not happen for a friend in such a state? ❑2❑

All the people of Braj are extremely distressed, greatly troubled, absorbed in sorrow. Like

lotus flowers pained without life-breath, their hearts have become torn. ❑3❑

‘Kumbhandas’ says — separated from Nandanandan, great torment has arisen. Now

without Giridhar, there is constant weeping, the eyes are filled with unending tears. ❑4❑

राग केदारो -

औरनकों समीप बछुरनो आयो मेरे ही हसा । सब कोऊ सोवे अपने सुख आली मोको चाहत जाय चहुँ दसा ॥।१॥

ना जानों या बधाता की ग त मेरे आंक लखे ऐसे कौन रसा । 'कुंभनदास' प्रभु ग रधर कहते नस दन ही रटे ज्यों

चातक घन त्रसा ॥२॥

Raag Kedaro

Separation has come near others, but has reached only me completely. Everyone else

sleeps in their own happiness, while I search in all directions. ❑1❑

I do not know what destiny the Creator has written, such suffering, who else has

received? ‘Kumbhandas’ says — O Lord Giridhar, day and night I repeat Your name, like

the chātak bird thirsting for the cloud. ❑2❑

✿✿✿

In this way, singing padas of separation, Kumbhandasji passed the days of mourning. After that, when he became purified, Kumbhandasji returned to his seva. He began to perform it in the same way as he always did, according to his daily vow and discipline. Such was the love that Kumbhandasji had for Shri Govardhannathji.

Prasang 9 – Bringing Kumbhandas to Gokul for Navneetpriyaji's Darshan

One day, Shri Gokulnathji and Shri Balakrishnaji, the two brothers, together said to Shri Gusainji, "Kumbhandas has never gone to Shri Gokul. Somehow, he should be brought to Shri Gokul so that Kumbhandasji may have the darshan of Shri Navneetpriyaji." Then Shri Gusainji Himself said, "Kumbhandasji is absorbed in the secret lila of Shri Govardhannathji. Shri Govardhannathji is deeply attached to him." Then Shri Gokulnathji said, "Still, please make some way to take him there. If afterwards he does not come again, that is the Lord's wish."

Then Shri Gusainji said, "Make some arrangement, but know this—Kumbhandasji will never cross over Shri Yamunaji." After a few days, Shri Gusainji Himself went to Shri Gokul, while Shri Balakrishnaji and Shri Gokulnathji remained at Shri Nathji's door (Shri Govardhan). On the eleventh day of the bright half of the month of Vaishakh, Shri Gokulnathji said to Shri Balakrishnaji, "Shri Gusainji is in Shri Gokul, and we two are here. So let us take Kumbhandasji to Shri Gokul."

Then Shri Balakrishnaji said, "How will you take him? Kumbhandasji will not sit on any mount (ride)." Then Shri Gokulnathji said, "True, Kumbhandasji will not sit on a mount, and during the day he will not go anywhere leaving the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. So, the night is bright; we will also go on foot. In this way we shall go, and then we will see what divine play occurs. To have the company of a devotee like Kumbhandasji, even in this way, will itself be a great gain."

After this, both brothers completed the seva up to the Shayan Arti of Shri Govardhannathji, put Shri Nathji to rest, and finished the closing rituals. Then they came outside and took Kumbhandasji by the hand, and began speaking of the moods of divine lila and the stories of the Lord.

Kumbhandasji became absorbed in the rasa of lila, so that he had no awareness of where he was. In that state, Shri Gokulnathji, talking about the Lord's stories, holding Kumbhandasji by the hand, came down from the hill toward Anyor and set out on the road to Shri Gokul. They were absorbed in secret talk. Shri Balakrishnaji, along with two or four Vaishnavas, quietly followed behind, listening to the talks between Kumbhandasji and Shri Gokulnathji, and proceeded

toward Shri Gokul.

On the way, while speaking, Shri Gokulnathji asked Kumbhandasji, “Does Shri Govardhandhar ever perform the adornment (singar) of Shri Swaminiji Himself?” Then Kumbhandasji, immersed in love, said, “Yes, yes, He does. One day, in the month of Ashwin, Shri Nathji and Shri Swaminiji, along with Lalita and the other sakhis, went into the forest at night to pick flowers. After that, together with the whole assembly, they sat on the adornment platform near the rasa-circle. Then Vishakhaji began to do the adornment.

“At that time, Shri Govardhannathji said, ‘Today, I will do the adornment myself.’ Then Shri Govardhannathji stood near Shri Swaminiji. The two could not remain without seeing each other’s faces. “Understanding the inner intent of both their hearts, the supremely clever Vishakhaji placed a mirror in front of Shri Swaminiji. In that mirror, the two divine faces appeared face to face, and they began to gaze at each other.

“Shri Thakurji, with His long dark glossy hair, holding a comb in His auspicious hand, began to string fine pearls with great skill, one by one, into the braid. Seeing the moon-like beauty of Shri Swaminiji’s face in the mirror, He became so pleased that the hair slipped from His hand. “All the pearls then slipped out of the braid and scattered over the jewel-studded adornment platform. A great laughter arose, because so much time had been spent adorning the braid, and in a single moment it all came undone. Thus the sakhis spoke.

“Then Shri Thakurji said to Vishakhaji, ‘You hold the braid; I will string it.’ So Vishakhaji held the braid, and again the braid was adorned with pearls, and the hairline was decorated with pearls. Afterwards, the sakhis made floral ornaments and gave them to Shri Thakurji. “As He adorned, again and again He saw the radiance of the moon-like face, and every pore of His being felt joy. In this way, Shri Govardhannathji completed all the adornment—kajal, bindi, tilak, and red dye on the feet. Afterwards, Shri Swaminiji adorned Shri Govardhandhar. Then many lilas such as rasa-vilas were performed.”

In this way, talking and talking, Kumbhandasji came to the bank of Shri Yamunaji in front of Shri Gokul. On the opposite bank, from Shri Gokul, Shri Gusainji Himself came across by boat to this side. It was already morning. Kumbhandasji had no awareness of his body; he was absorbed in the rasa of lila. When he became alert, he realized it was morning. Just then, seeing Shri Gusainji, his hand slipped from the hand of Shri Gokulnathji.

Kumbhandasji, in great haste, began to run, saying, “Who will sing the kirtan at Shri Govardhannathji’s place? Alas, alas, my seva is gone!” Saying this in his mind, he ran, running very fast. Then Shri Gokulnathji, Shri Balakrishnaji, and all the Vaishnavas ran behind to catch Kumbhandasji. But Kumbhandasji kept running and running; they could not catch him. Afterwards, they came to Shri Gusainji. Then Shri Gusainji said, “Now where will you find Kumbhandas? Why did you bring him here? He will never cross this Shri Yamunaji. I had already told you this before.”

Then Shri Gokulnathji said to Shri Gusainji, “Even if he did not cross, what is lost? In the feelings of divine talks the whole night, a great and extraordinary attainment has taken place. That is a great benefit, for the satsang of true devotees is rare even for a single moment.” Hearing this, Shri Gusainji said, “That you have spoken correctly. But at this time, Kumbhandas has had to run back. And until Kumbhandas goes up on Shri Giriraj, Shri Govardhannathji will not awaken. He will awaken only when Kumbhandas sings the waking kirtan. In this way, Shri Govardhannathji is dependent on His devotee.

“So, if you wish to hear talks about the Lord, then go to Parasoli in Jamunavata and ask Kumbhandas. There, Kumbhandasji will tell you.” After this, Shri Gokulnathji, Shri Balakrishnaji, and all the Vaishnavas returned to Shri Gokul. Shri Gusainji’s horse, with saddle on, was tied on this bank. Shri Gusainji quickly mounted and rode off. Kumbhandasji was also running along the path. Coming up to him, Shri Gusainji said, “You have never seen this road; you will get lost. So run behind the horse.” Then Kumbhandasji ran behind Shri Gusainji.

Meanwhile, Ramdas Bhitariya and others, who bathed and came up the hill, were touched (sanctified) in this divine play. In this way, four gharis of the day passed. Then Shri Gusainji arrived at Shri Giriraj, dismounted from the horse, and immediately bathed and went up to the temple on the hill. There he saw that all the inner sevaks, including Ramdas, had bathed and come into the temple. Then Shri Gusainji asked, “Ramdas! Why has there been so much repetition today?”

Ramdas replied, “Maharaj! We do not know what has happened today. We have bathed four times, and all four times all the inner sevaks have been touched (become impure by contact). Now we have come after bathing for the fifth time, and we still do not understand the reason.” Then Shri Gusainji said, “This is a divine play that Shri Govardhannathji has performed for the sake of Kumbhandasji.”

After this, Shri Gusainji had the conch sounded and awakened Shri Govardhannathji. At that time, Kumbhandasji sang the waking padas. Then Shri Govardhannathji arose. In his heart, Kumbhandasji felt great joy, thinking, “I have received my kirtan seva.” Afterwards, up to the Rajbhog, Shri Gusainji remained engaged in seva. That morning was Nrisimha Chaturdashi. The saffron-colored scarf and turban were prepared. Then the seva continued up to Shayan. In this way, Kumbhandasji never went to Shri Gokul. He remained absorbed in the lila-rasa of Shri Govardhannathji. Such was Kumbhandasji, a supremely grace-filled devotee.

Prasang 10 – “Why go there when I am here with you?”

Once in Parasoli, Kumbhandasji was sitting in his field, and Shri Govardhannathji was playing in the field in front of him. Meanwhile, the time for Utthapan arrived, so Kumbhandasji got up to go to Shri Giriraj. Then Shri Nathji said to Kumbhandasji, “Where are you going?” He replied, “The time of Utthapan has come, so I am going up to Giriraj for the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji.” Then Shri Govardhannathji said, “I am playing here near you—so why are you going there?”

Then Kumbhandasji said, “Maharaj! Here You play and give darshan out of Your own grace and from Your own side. Even now, if You suddenly disappear, I have no claim upon You. But in the temple, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu has installed You; from there You do not go anywhere, and there You give darshan to everyone.

“And the attachment I have for darshan in the temple is such that, even though You, out of grace, give me darshan while I sit at home, and now You are granting me the experience of Your grace here, still, the seva and darshan in the temple have their own power and glory. Therefore, it will not do without going there.” Then Shri Govardhannathji laughed and said, “Kumbhandas! Your feeling is supremely wondrous. Therefore I do not leave you even for a single moment.” After that, Shri Nathji and Kumbhandasji set out together from Parasoli.

When they reached Govindakund, the conch was sounded. Then Shri Govardhannathji entered the temple, and Kumbhandasji came along with Him as far as Anyor. From there, he climbed the hill himself and took the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji in the temple. In this way, Kumbhandasji was such a beloved devotee of the Lord.

Prasang 11 – The Mango Seller and the Rājput's Dream

One day, two gardeners brought large, very beautiful mangoes in baskets to Parasoli, at Chandrasarovar. They set down the baskets and, near the pond, placed all the mangoes on the ground and began to wipe off the dirt with cloths. At that time, Kumbhandasji, having taken darshan of the Rajbhog Arti, was coming down from Shri Giriraj and came to Chandrasarovar to drink water. Seeing that the mangoes were very beautiful and worthy of being offered to Shri Govardhannathji, Kumbhandas said to the gardener, "Where are you taking these mangoes?"

The gardener said, "I will take them to Mathura. There I will not take less than ten rupees." Kumbhandas had no money at all. What could he do? Then, remembering Shri Govardhannathji in his mind, he said, "Maharaj! This offering is supremely beautiful and worthy of You, for You alone are the enjoyer of the finest things. Therefore, please eat these mangoes." Then Shri Govardhannathji came and ate all the mangoes. The gardener did not know. He filled the baskets with mangoes and went to Mathura. Evening came. A Rājput from the village of Māt had come to Mathura on some business. Seeing the mangoes, he said, "Where will you take them?" The gardener replied, "I will not take less than ten rupees."

The Rājput gave ten rupees, took all the mangoes, and went to the bank of Shri Yamunaji. With him was a Sanodiya Brahmin, to whom he gave some of the mangoes. Each of them kept fifty mangoes for home, and they each sat on the bank of Shri Yamunaji and sucked fifty mangoes there. After that, both of them slept in a market in Shri Mathura. In their dreams, both had the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. When they woke up, the Rājput asked, "Brahmin Deva! Did you see anything?" The Brahmin said, "I had the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji Thakur." Then the Rājput asked the Brahmin, "Where does Shri Govardhannathji reside?" The Brahmin said, "From here, seven kos away is Shri Govardhan Hill; He resides there."

Then the Rājput said to the Brahmin, "You are a great fool. After having direct darshan of such a divine Form, why do you keep wandering in other places? I have had the darshan of that Form in my dream; I cannot remain without Him. "In the morning, you take all the mangoes, and I will give you five rupees. You simply take me to the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji." The Brahmin said, "Very well." When morning came, the Rājput gave fifty mangoes to the Brahmin.

The Brahmin went to his home in Mathura, took another hundred mangoes from his own stock, and came back to the Rājput. Then both of them set out.

They had the darshan of the Shayan Arti of Shri Govardhannathji. Shri Nathji captured the mind of that Rājput. After the darshan was over, the Rājput gave his weapons, clothes, and five rupees to the Brahmin and kept ten rupees with himself. Then the Brahmin said, “I will go home.” The Brahmin returned to his home in Mathura. The Rājput, wearing only a dhoti, stood near the Dandvati stone. Just then, after finishing the closing rituals of Shri Govardhannathji, Shri Gusainji Himself came down from the hill. The Rājput prostrated and said, “Maharaj! I have been wandering for many days. Please accept me and keep me near your feet.”

Then Shri Gusainji said, “The grace of Kumbhandasji has fallen upon you; therefore your state is like this. Your fortune is very great.” Then Shri Gusainji returned to His seat and gave the Rājput a spiritual name. The Rājput offered ten rupees as a gift to Shri Gusainji. Shri Gusainji said, “Keep it with yourself.” Because you have no expenses, you already gave all of it to that Brahmin.” Then the Rājput bowed down and made a request: “Maharaj! What use do I now have for these rupees? I am now in Your refuge. Whatever service (duty) You instruct me to do, that I will do.”

Then Rājput again requested: “Maharaj! In my previous birth, who was I? And by what merit has it happened that I have obtained Your darshan?” Then Shri Gusainji, out of grace, said to him: “In the past, in Braj, you were a cowherd (gop). You would take up weapons and go along with the cows of Shri Nandarayji. One day you killed a snake; due to that offense, you took many births in the world.

“Later, when these mangoes were seen by Kumbhandasji, he resolved in his mind and offered them to Shri Govardhannathji. Thus, Kumbhandasji caused all those mangoes of the gardener to be accepted by Shri Nathji. “After that, you gave ten rupees to that gardener and took the mangoes from him, and you kept fifty of them. You took those mangoes which were Mahaprasad, and since you are a divine jiva, your mind was turned, and Shri Nathji gave you darshan in a dream. “That Brahmin was not a divine jiva, so although Shri Nathji did give him darshan in the dream, he still did not gain understanding of it.

“In the lila, your name was ‘Nena’. Now you should go, taking up weapons, together with the cowherds of Shri Nathji’s cows. And you

should take Mahaprasad in Shri Nathji's kitchen. As for weapons and clothes, we will give those to you. And today you should keep a vrata (fast/vow), for tomorrow We will perform your initiation of surrender (samarpan)." Then that Rājput bowed down.

After that, the next day, Shri Gusainji Himself, after adorning (doing the singar of) Shri Nathji, bathed the Rājput and, in front of Shri Nathji, performed the brahma-sambandh (formal dedication of his self to the Lord). Then the intellect of that Rājput became pure. After that, he was given the vessel for "juthni" (the plate for taking remnants). Then, after giving him weapons, Shri Gusainji Himself gave him prasadi clothes. Taking these, he mounted a horse and went along with the cowherds. His mind became fixed in the form of Shri Govardhannathji. Within a few days, Shri Nathji began to give him darshan among the cowherds. After this, Rājput became a greatly graced devotee.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This shows that when Kumbhandasji places an offering mentally in seva, Shri Govardhannathji truly consumes it. By taking those mangoes as Mahaprasad, divine grace came upon that Rājput. Therefore, whatever offering a devotee personally prepares and offers with his own hands, Shri Thakurji indeed accepts with love. And what can be said of Mahaprasad, which is itself beyond the worldly realm? After this, Rājput's two sons came to him.

Then the Rājput said to his two sons: "Sons! We are soldiers. Our lives are often wasted in some battle. The Lord has shown mercy upon me, so now you should understand this: 'My father has died.' Therefore, you should now go and look after your household. Do not wait for me; I will not return." Afterwards, the Rājput's two sons went back to their home and told all the news: "Our father has become a renunciate (has taken detachment). So now, what need do we have of him?" Then they too abandoned all attachment to their household and sat free of worldly involvement.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): In this way, Mahaprasad and the darshan of the Lord and His devotees bear fruit for those who are divine jivas. This principle is being shown here.

Thus, Kumbhandasji is such a devotee that, easily and inwardly, through the mangoes, he became an instrument of grace upon the Rājput. Therefore, whatever divine actions devotees perform should be understood as extraordinary, beyond the ordinary. Why? Because Shri Govardhannathji is under the control of His devotees. And the

wife of Kumbhandasji and his five sons only obtained the name (i.e., the status) of being related to him. Still, by being in the company of Kumbhandasji, they too were uplifted. And the niece of Kumbhandas, who was his brother's daughter, became a widow as soon as she was married, so there was no worldly relationship through her husband's side.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why? Because in her original nature she is a divine jiva. She is a sakhi of Shri Vishakhaji. In the lila, her name is 'Sarovari'. Her mother and father died, so she lived in the house of Kumbhandas. In the lila she is a sakhi of Vishakhaji, and here too she was in the company of a devotee like Kumbhandasji. Because of this, Shri Govardhannathji would give darshan to the niece as well and would show her deep affection.

Prasang 12 – Shri Govardhannathji Arranges Shri Gusainji's

Birthday

Once, the birthday of Shri Gusainji arrived. At that time, Shri Govardhannathji thought within His own mind, "My own birthday was celebrated in the world by Shri Gusainji together with all the Vaishnavas. Therefore, I too should now celebrate the birthday of Shri Gusainji." Thinking thus, when on the eighth day of the dark half of the month of Paush, Ramdasji was adorning Shri Nathji, at that time Kumbhandasji was singing adornment-kirtans. Shri Gusainji Himself was in Shri Gokul.

Then Shri Govardhannathji said to Ramdasji, "For My birthday, Shri Gusainji Himself celebrates with great enthusiasm together with all the Vaishnavas. Therefore, I too wish to celebrate the birthday of Shri Gusainji. All of you together should decorate (prepare) the celebration of Shri Gusainji's birthday and offer me the appropriate items. Tomorrow is the birthday."

Then Ramdas requested, "Maharaj! What offering shall we prepare?" Shri Govardhannathji said, "Prepare jalebi in the form of rasa (syrupy sweets)." Then Ramdas told this to Kumbhandasji: "This is very good." Afterwards, Ramdasji finished his seva and gathered all the sevaks together and said, "Tomorrow is the birthday of Shri Gusainji, so we must prepare the offering for Shri Govardhannathji." Then Sadu Pande said, "Take as much ghee and flour as you need from my house."

After that, Kumbhandasji immediately went home. There was nothing at home, so he sold two he-buffalo calves and two she-buffalo calves to a Brajvasi and brought five rupees, which he gave to Ramdasji. All the other sevaks gave one rupee, some even two rupees; with that they ordered sugar. Sadu Pande brought the ghee and flour. The whole night they made jalebis.

After that, morning came. Ramdasji gave an auspicious bath (abhyang), and the saffron-colored turban, saffron clothes, upper garment, and cap, which Shri Gusainji Himself had prepared with His own hands in Shri Gokul and sent, were put on (for Shri Nathji). Then the offering (bhog) was placed. Then Shri Govardhannathji said to Kumbhandasji, "You sing the congratulatory song (badhai) of Shri Gusainji." Then Kumbhandasji sang the badhai.

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राग देवगंधार -

आज बधाई श्रीवल्लभद्वार। प्रगट भए पूरन पुरुषोत्तम पिुष्ट करन वस्तार ॥ १॥

भा ग उदै सब देवी जीवनके नःसाधन जन कये उद्धार । 'कुंभनदास' ग रधरन जुगल वपु नगम अगम सब

साधन सार ॥२॥

Raag Devgandhar

Today there is an auspicious celebration at the door of Shri Vallabh. Manifest has

appeared the complete Purushottam, expanding the nourishment of Pushti. □1□

Fortune has risen for all goddesses, and the helpless people of the world have been

uplifted. ‘Kumbhandas’ says — the twin form of Giridhar is the essence of all means,

beyond the reach of the Vedas. □2□

राग सारंग -

प्रगट भए श्रीवल्लभ आय। सेवा रस वस्तार करनकों गूढ झान सब प्रगट दखाय ॥१॥

नजजन सकल कये पावन घर बंदनबार बंधाय । ' कुंभनदास' ग रधर गुन म हमा बंदीजन चारन गुन गाय ॥२॥

Raag Sarang

Manifest has appeared, Shri Vallabh, having come. to reveal clearly all the secret

understandings of expanding the rasa of seva. □1□

All His own people have been made pure, and the knots of worldly bondages have been

untied in every home. ‘Kumbhandas’ says — the glory and virtues of Giridhar

are sung by the attendants at His feet. □2□

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So, in this way, Kumbhandasji sang a great many praises, and when Shri Govardhannathji heard them, He became very pleased. And here, Shri Gusainji Himself had Shri Navneetpriyaji bathed with oil, dressed Him in saffron clothes and a kulah (turban), then offered Rajbhog and went to the shrine of Shrinathji. Then Ramdas said, “Rajbhog has arrived.” Then Shri Gusainji Himself bathed and went up the hill to the temple. When it was time, he went to see the Bhog Sarai and saw that many baskets of jalebi had been placed there.

Then Shri Gusainji Himself asked Ramdasji, “What festival is today, that such a large amount of material has been prepared?” Then Ramdasji said, “Today is the birthday of Yours, which Shri Govardhandhar celebrates — and all the sevaks have arranged this material.” Then Shri Gusainji Himself performed Aarti in the Bhog Sarai. After that, he came to his seat and sat down. There He called Ramdasji and Shri Gusainji Himself asked, “The material is very much, and the sevaks (of the temple) are few, and they are without possessions — so how has all this material been managed?”

Then Ramdasji said, “Maharaj! The ghee and flour were given by Sadoo Pandey, and Kumbhandasji gave five rupees. And these Vaishnavs — some gave one, some gave two. Whoever could manage something gave it. In this way, twenty-one rupees were collected. Sugar was bought with that. Shri Prabhuji accepted it.”

Just then, Kumbhandasji came and offered prostration to Shri Gusainji. Then Shri Gusainji Himself asked Kumbhandasji, “Kumbhandas! From where did you bring these five rupees? We all know the condition of your home.” Then Kumbhandasji said, “Maharaj! Where is my home? My home is at Your lotus-feet, that You already know. I had two cows and two calves more than needed, so I sold them. Selling my body, life, home, wife, and sons for Your sake — then Vaishnav dharma becomes fulfilled. Maharaj! We are worldly householders — how can Vaishnav dharma arise in us? This is only Your grace, knowing me to be humble.”

Hearing these words of Kumbhandasji, Shri Gusainji’s heart filled with emotion. Then He said, “Those upon whom Shri Acharyaji bestows grace and gives such humility — only they can receive it. May Shri Govardhannathji always reside with him.” In this way, Shri Gusainji greatly praised Kumbhandasji. Thus, Kumbhandasji was such a

recipient of grace.

Prasang 13 – Kumbhandas Asks About Pushtimarg

Principles

At another time, Kumbhandasji asked Shri Acharyaji about the principles of the Pushtimarg. Then Shri Acharyaji, out of grace, explained the eighty-four offenses, the characteristics of Rajasi, Tamasi, and Sattviki devotees, and the method of seva from early morning until night. He explained the sentiments of the child-leelas and youth-leelas. After that He said, “Upon whom Shri Govardhannathji’s grace falls, they will ask and perform all this in this age. Only devotees like you will ask and perform. Ahead, a very difficult age will come, and no one will ask, and no one will tell.” In this way, Shri Acharyaji spoke to Kumbhandasji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why so? Just as the milk of a Sindhini cow does not stay except in a vessel of gold, in the same way, the sentiment of Bhagavad-leela and Bhagavad-dharma does not remain in the heart of anyone except a Bhagavadiya.

Prasang 14 – The Nature of True Vaishnav Qualities

And one day Kumbhandasji made a request to Shri Gusainji: “Maharaj! In my house there is my wife, and out of seven, five are sons, and the wives of those seven sons. But none of them have firm devotion to Bhagavan. Only one niece has firm devotion to Bhagavan. What is the reason for that?” Then Shri Gusainji called all Vaishnavs to hear and then said to Kumbhandasji, “Kumbhandas! Listen attentively. Be alert. I am telling an ancient history.”

All Vaishnavs became attentive. Then Shri Gusainji said, “There was a Brahmin who had a daughter. When she became of marriageable age, the Brahmin called another Brahmin and said, ‘Fix a groom for my daughter, find a good family, and arrange the engagement.’ That Brahmin went for the engagement. After he left, another Brahmin came, and the father told him the same thing. So the second Brahmin also went to arrange the engagement. Soon a third Brahmin came, and the same words were spoken to him. So the third Brahmin also went to arrange the engagement. Then a fourth Brahmin came, and he also was told the same. So all four Brahmins went in four different directions by Bhagavan’s wish. Two to three kos away, there was a

village, and in two nearby villages, all four Brahmins arranged engagements.

After a month, they came to call for the engagement ceremony. Afterwards, they applied tilak to the groom and all four Brahmins came to the girl's father and said, 'We have arranged the engagement and done the tilak. After a month, at dawn, is the auspicious time.' All four Brahmins said this. Then the girl's father said, 'What have you done? My daughter is only one. You four have arranged four grooms — how will this work?' Then the four Brahmins said, 'You told us to do it, so we did. If after a month you do not perform the marriage, then we will give up our lives upon you. Once engagement and tilak are done, they can never be undone.'

The father said, 'Very well, there is still a month. Let us see what fate brings.' The four Brahmins replied, 'The day before the wedding, we will come to perform the marriage.' Saying so, they returned home. Then the girl's father became deeply worried. 'Where can I escape? If life leaves me, the girl will still be ruined. What should I do?' Because of worry, he stopped eating and drinking, and in this way four days passed in hunger. On the fifth day, the Brahmin was performing his evening prayers at the river. A Bhagavadiya, wandering there, came and bathed in the river. Just then the Brahmin cried out in deep sorrow. The heart of a Bhagavad-bhakta is soft; he could not bear the Brahmin's suffering.

The devotee asked, 'Brahmin! What sorrow has befallen you that you cry out like this?' Then the Brahmin told everything. Hearing this, the devotee said, 'I do not stay at any one place, but for your sake I will sit here at the river. Do not reveal me. And one day before the marriage, come and tell me. Shri Thakurji will make everything well. Now go home and eat.' The Brahmin agreed. When one day was left for the wedding, at dawn the Brahmin went to the devotee and requested, 'Tomorrow morning is the wedding. Now please tell me some remedy.' The Vaishnav said, 'Come in the evening.'

In the evening the Brahmin went to him again. Then the devotee said, 'Catch whatever animals or birds come before you.' The Brahmin sat by the river. A cat came — he caught it. Then a bitch came — he caught it. Then a she-donkey came — he caught that too. Then the devotee said, 'Lock all three in a room.' They were locked. Then the devotee said, 'When your daughter goes to sleep, lock her in the same room.' When the daughter slept, the Brahmin put the daughter, along with her cot, into that room and locked it, saying, 'Make preparations for the wedding.'

Hours of the night passed. All four grooms arrived. The four Brahmins who had arranged the engagements encouraged and calmed them. When the time of the wedding arrived, the Brahmin said to the devotee, ‘Now the time has come.’ The devotee said, ‘Open the room and give each groom one girl, and perform the weddings.’

The Brahmin opened the room and saw four girls — same appearance, same age, equal in every way, indistinguishable. He gave each groom one girl, performed the weddings, and sent them off. Then he offered gifts to all four Brahmins and sent them on their way. The devotee then said, ‘I will now go.’ The Brahmin fell at his feet and said, ‘You have given me back my life. Consider this house and daughter as yours. Whatever you desire, take it.’ The devotee said, ‘I desire nothing. Your sorrow has been removed by Shri Thakurji — that itself is the great thing.’

Then the Brahmin asked, ‘All four girls became alike — how will I know which groom my true daughter is with? If I call my daughter, how will I know who she is?’ The devotee said, ‘Call your four sons-in-law and ask them the qualities of their wives. Then you will know. Whichever qualities match human nature — that will be your daughter.’ Saying so, the devotee left.

After some days, the Brahmin called all four sons-in-law and had food prepared for all. He seated one to eat and asked, ‘Is my daughter agreeable or not? What are her characteristics?’ That one said, ‘She has all virtues, but like a bitch she growls; her tongue is not steady, her behavior is improper, and she is not pleasing.’

Then he called the second son-in-law and asked, ‘What are her qualities?’ He said, ‘Your daughter has good qualities, but she is gluttonous. Whatever is prepared for Thakur, she secretly eats. She has the nature of a cat — she cannot rest until she has eaten from five houses.’

Then the third son-in-law was called and asked, ‘What are her qualities?’ He said, ‘Your daughter has good qualities, but when she comes home, she is like a she-donkey — eating straw, always unclean. And whoever comes, she kicks them with both feet like a donkey — even me.’

Then the fourth son-in-law was called and asked, ‘Tell me the qualities of my daughter.’ He said, ‘What shall I say about your daughter? She is like Lakshmi, like a goddess. Sweet words, gentle speech, excellent conduct, good behavior, devotion to husband, guru, Thakur, and

Vaishnavs — all are within her.' Then the Brahmin knew, 'This one is my daughter.' He then called that daughter and groom.

"So, Kumbhandasji! Whichever person has the qualities of a Vaishnav — only that person is truly human. What happened even if someone got a human body? Ravana and Kumbhakarna, because of wicked actions, were called demons. According to one's actions, so is one's form known. That niece of yours is highly devoted — through your association she will attain fulfillment." In this way, Shri Gusainji instructed Kumbhandasji and all Vaishnavs. Thus, Kumbhandasji was such a graced Bhagavadiya of Shri Acharyaji.

Prasang 15 – The Final Moments of Kumbhandas

Afterward, the body of Kumbhandasji became very weak. He came and sat near Sankarshan Kund with others. Then Chaturbhujdas said, "Shall we lift you in our arms and take you to Jamunavata village?" Kumbhandasji said, "Now in two or four hours this body will be gone. So I will remain here." Then Chaturbhujdasji took the darshan of Shri Govardhannathji's Rajbhog Aarti.

Shri Gusainji Himself asked Chaturbhujdas, "How is Kumbhandas? And where is he?" Chaturbhujdas replied, "He is sitting near Sankarshan Kund." Then Shri Gusainji Himself came to Kumbhandasji. Arriving, Shri Gusainji asked, "Kumbhandas! At this time, in which leela is your mind? Tell me." At that time, Kumbhandasji tried to rise but could not. Bowing his head, mentally offering prostration, he sang this kirtan. The pada:

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

बसरी गयो लाल करत गो दोहन । नर ख अनूप चंद मुख इकटक रह्यो है सांवरो मोहन ॥१॥

नव नागरी व चत्र चतुर गुन अंग अंग रूप सुठोहन। 'कुंभनदास' लाल ग रधर मन हरयो क टली भोहन ॥।२॥

Raag Sarang -

Lal forgot Himself while milking the cow, for seeing the incomparable moon-like face,

the dark-complexioned Mohan remained fixed in a single-pointed gaze. □1□

The new maiden, with wondrous clever qualities, her beauty shining in every limb. ‘Kumbhandas’ says — Lal Giridhar stole the heart with His sharp, sidelong glances. □2□

राग सारंग -

लाल तेरी चतव न चत ही चुराव त। नंदगाम वृषभानपुरा बीच मारग चलन न पाव त ॥१॥

हों भ र हो ड र हो न ह काहू ल लता दृगन चलाव त। 'कुंभनदास' प्रभु गोवद्धनधर धरयो सो क्यों न बतावत ॥२॥

Raag Sarang

Lal, Your glance steals the mind itself. between Nandgaon and Vrishbhanpur, on the path

I am unable to walk. □1□

Whether I fill up, whether I fear, Lalita moves her eyes toward no one else. ‘Kumbhandas’

says — O Lord Govardhandhar, what You have held in Your heart, why do You not reveal

it? □2□

✿✿✿

So, this pada was sung by Kumbhandasji. Then Shri Gusainji Himself asked, “Kumbhandas! You have described this leela, but tell me where the mind of your inner being resides.” Then Kumbhandasji sang this pada before Shri Gusainji. The pada:

✿✿✿

राग बहागरो -

तोय मलनको बोहोत करत है मोहनलाल गोवद्धनघारी। उत्तर मो ह देऊ कन भा म न कहा कहों हो बात तहारी

॥१॥

देखी तूजो झरोखन के मग तन सोहत झूमक सारी। तन मन बसीरी लाल ग रघर के एक चत तें टरत न टारी ॥२॥

क हरी सखी हो क ह मग आऊँ तू बताइ दे ठौर सुचारी । 'कुंभनदास' प्रभु बैठे तहां दे खयत हैं जहां उंची चत्रसारी

Raag Bihagro -

For meeting You she makes many efforts, Mohanlal Govardhan-dhari. give me an

answer, O fair one, what shall I say of your matter? □1□

I saw you standing at the window-path, your body adorned with swinging ornaments.

body and mind became filled with Lal Giridhar, from a single-pointed thought you could

not turn away. □2□

Tell me, O friend, by which path shall I come? show me a proper place. ‘Kumbhandas’

says — the Lord is seated there, where a high painted chamber may be seen. □3□

राग बहागरो -

र सकनी रसमें रह त गढ़ी। कनक बे ल वृषभान नं दनी स्याम तमाल चढ़ी ॥१॥

वहरत श्री ग रधरलाल संग कौन पाठ पढ़ी। 'कुंभनदास" प्रभु श्रीगोवद्धनधर र त रस के ल बढ़ी ॥ २॥

Raag Bihagro -

The lover-girl remains absorbed in rasa,

like a golden vine, the daughter of Vrishbhanu has climbed upon the dark Tamal tree.

□1□

Wandering in play with Shri Giridhar Lal, what lesson should she study? ‘Kumbhandas’

says — with Shri Govardhan-dhar, the play of love and rasa has increased. □2□

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After singing this pada, Kumbhandasji left his body and, going to the

Nikunj leela, attained it. Afterwards, Shri Gusainji Himself went to Gopalpur. Then Chaturbhujdasji and all the sons performed the final rites of Kumbhandasji. Kumbhandasji was attained at the doorway of the village near Anyor where the leela is.

Afterwards, Shri Gusainji arrived for the seva from Utthapan until night. But He did not speak with any Vaishnav, and remained sorrowful. Then Ramdasji said to Shri Gusainji, “Maharaj! Why is it so?” Then Shri Gusainji Himself said from His holy mouth, “Such a Bhagavadiya has become hidden. Now the disappearance of devotees has occurred upon the earth.”

In this way, Shri Gusainji praised Kumbhandasji from His own holy mouth. Kumbhandasji was such a graced Bhagavadiya of Shri Acharyaji, upon whom Shri Govardhannathji and Shri Gusainji always remained pleased. Therefore, the extent of his story cannot be crossed. His story is indescribable; how far can it be told?

Varta 84 - Krishnadas

Now, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu's sevak, Krishnadas Adhikari, who is among the Ashtachhap poets whose verses are sung, this is the emotional narration of his story.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Krishnadasji, in the divine play, is the intimate friend of Shri Thakurji named Rishabh. This is his manifestation. In the daytime pastimes he is the friend 'Rishabh', and in the nighttime pastimes he is the inner companion-sakhi of Shri Lalitaji. Shri Lalitaji has four forms. The first is her own middle form. With this form she experiences the nikunj (secluded grove) pastimes of Shri Govardhannathji and Shri Swaminiji. Her second form becomes Rishabh, the friend, who goes together into the forest and experiences the rasa of the daytime pastimes. Her third form becomes Damodardas Harsani, who always stays with Shri Acharyaji. Shri Acharyaji used to call him Damala. This has been explained in detail in Damodardasji's own story. And the fourth form of Lalitaji is Krishnadas. He remained near Govardhandhar and performed his duties. Shri Giriraj has eight gates, and among them, facing Barsana, there is a small gate. Through that gate Shri Govardhannathji proceeds to perform the Rasa. Krishnadas is the guardian of that gate.

This Krishnadas is from Gujarat, from a village called "Chilotra". There, he was born in the house of a Kunbi. That Kunbi was the headman of that village. He exercised authority in the village. When Krishnadas was born in that Kunbi Patel's house, at that time the Kunbi called many learned Pandits and Brahmins from various villages, gathered them, and asked them: "A son has been born to me. Tell me all the signs of this child. And tell me the destiny of this son. I will give you wealth throughout his whole lifetime as long as he lives."

Then all the Brahmins said to the Kunbi: "Whether you give us something or not, hear this clearly—this son of yours will become a devotee of Shri Bhagwan. His name will be Krishnadas. And he will not remain in your home." Hearing this, Patel Kunbi became very sad. He performed many acts of charity and merit, and he named the child Krishnadas.

Later, when Krishnadas became five years old, he began attending

narrations of divine stories. His parents did not understand this and would weep, for he would not eat or drink. Then his parents said: “Let him go wherever he wishes. If he loves renunciants even at this young age, then he will become a renunciant. The Brahmins told us this beforehand. Therefore, do not attach worldly affection to this son. This son will bring sorrow to everyone.” After that, Krishnadas would listen to narrations wherever they occurred. In this way Krishnadas reached twelve or thirteen years of age.

Then, one day, a merchant (banjara) came and camped outside the village. After selling all his goods in the village of Chilotra, he collected fourteen thousand rupees. At night, secretly, Krishnadas’s father arranged for the robbery of all fourteen thousand rupees belonging to the banjara. Out of the fourteen thousand, Krishnadas’s father kept thirteen thousand rupees. Krishnadas came to know of this matter. Then Krishnadas said to his father: “You have done a wrong deed.” “Why?” “Because you had the money of another—the banjara—stolen. If you return his money, then your welfare will be ensured.”

Then the father beat Krishnadas and said: “Do not say this to anyone. I am the authority of the village. This is the work of an authority.” Then Krishnadas said: “Now you will fall into a downfall.” Saying this, he remained silent. Morning came. The banjara came crying at the courtyard, and said to Krishnadas’s father: “The thieves have robbed me.” Then Krishnadas’s father said: “Why did you stay in the village? Now why do you complain to us?” Saying this, the authority instructed his men: “Throw this banjara out of the village. He has come crying early in the morning.” The men drove him out. All his wealth was gone, and he wept bitterly.

Krishnadas ran from a distance and came to him. Compassion arose in Krishnadas’s heart. Krishnadas thought: “If my father suffers for his wrong deed, let it happen. But this banjara is a traveler; I should help him.”

Then Krishnadas went to the banjara and said: “Sit with me alone somewhere; I will tell you something.” Then taking him aside, Krishnadas said: “Your entire money has been stolen. My father is the authority here; he had the theft done. He gave one thousand rupees to the thieves and kept thirteen thousand rupees himself. Because of this, you will not get justice in this village. Therefore, go to Rajnagar (Ahmedabad) and complain to the king. Call me as a witness. But do it in such a way that my father’s life is not lost, nor the lives of the thieves, and your good still happens. Bring me before the king, and I will tell everything. Then you will get back all your goods and

money."

Then the banjara went to Rajnagar, told the king everything, and said: "The father ordered the theft, and the son told me. But let no one be killed. Please arrange only that my belongings may be returned." Then the king said: "Blessed is that son who told of his father's theft. I will retain him with me." Then the king called fifty men and soldiers and said: "Go to Chilotra and arrest the authority and his son. Go secretly so that no one knows."

Those fifty men came and stayed hidden. One evening, the authority was standing at the door of his house, and his son was also there. The king's men captured the authority and brought him to Rajnagar. The king asked him: "You are the authority, and you rob a traveler? Return the banjara's money." The authority said: "Someone must have falsely accused me. I do not know anything about this." Then the king said: "Your son, having taken an oath, has spoken the truth." Then the father said: "If the son has said so, then it is true."

So the king asked Krishnadas: "Speak the truth." Krishnadas said: "There is a soul within, so if it errs, it suffers. One thousand rupees were given to the thieves, and thirteen thousand rupees my father kept. I advised him at that very time, but he did not listen, so now he is receiving the result. But give the banjara his money, and do not punish them further." Then the king said to Krishnadas's father: "Even now, beware. Otherwise, your life will be taken."

Then Krishnadas's father said: "A wrong deed has indeed occurred. But allow this banjara to come with me, and I will give him all his money from my home." Then the king sent the banjara and Krishnadas's father with two men. And the king said to Krishnadas: "You stay with me, for you are truthful."

Then Krishnadas said: "What will you make me do by keeping me with you? I will speak the truth, and everyone will be displeased with me. In this present age, things are like this. So I will become a renunciant. I did not stay even for my father's wrong act."

The king made great efforts to keep Krishnadas, but Krishnadas did not stay and eventually returned home with his father. Then the father called the thieves and told them all the news of his son: "This son has caused our ruin. Bring one thousand rupees, or your lives and ours will be lost." The thieves brought one thousand rupees. With the thirteen thousand rupees in the house, the father gave the banjara fourteen thousand rupees and returned the stolen goods and sent him

off.

After that, the king appointed another authority in the village of Chilotra. Then Krishnadas's father said: "Son! Because of your wrong act, the authority was lost, and all our accumulated wealth is gone." Then Krishnadas said to his father: "Father! You committed such a bad act that both this world and the next would have been spoiled. The soul has been saved. Losing the authority was good. If you had kept the authority, you would have committed more sin."

Then the father said: "You are a faqir by birth. You have turned us into faqirs also. Now what is in your mind?" Krishnadas said: "Father, if you keep me at home, you will become a faqir. Therefore, send me away." Then the father said: "Take some expenses from home and go far away. Then we will neither see you nor suffer." Krishnadas bowed to his father and left. Then he thought: "I should visit all the holy pilgrimages." After some days, Krishnadas came to Shri Mathuraji, bathed at Vishrant Ghat, and went to Braj. Wandering, he reached Shri Govardhan.

There he heard: "The temple of Devdaman has been built. In two or four days, he will be installed, and the people of Braj will rejoice greatly. Since the time Devdaman manifested from Shri Giriraj Govardhan, he has given happiness to all and fulfilled everyone's desires." Hearing this, Krishnadas thought: "I should have the darshan of Devdaman." Then he went and took the darshan of Devdaman. Shri Acharyaji himself performed Rajbhog Aarti. As soon as he saw the darshan, Shri Govardhandhar captivated Krishnadas's mind. Shri Govardhandhar kept looking toward Krishnadas. Then Shri Govardhannathji said to Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu: "This Krishnadas has come. He has been separated for a long time. I am watching him."

Then Shri Acharyaji came to Krishnadas and said: "Krishnadas! You have come!" Krishnadas offered obeisance and pleaded: "Maharaj! By your grace I have come. Now keep me in your refuge." Then Shri Acharyaji said: "Go quickly, bathe, and come. Shri Govardhannathji is looking toward you. So return soon." Then Krishnadas ran and bathed in Rudrakund. Afterwards, Krishnadas came into the temple to Shri Acharyaji. Then Shri Acharyaji seated Krishnadas in the presence of Shri Govardhannathji and conducted the ceremony of name-surrender for him. Krishnadas is a devijiya soul, so immediately he experienced all divine pastimes. At that moment Krishnadas sang this kirtan. The verse:

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राग सारंग -

वल्लभ प तत- उद्धारन जानो। सर न लेत लीला दरसावत ता पर ढरत गोवद्धनरानो ॥१॥

साधन वृथा करत दन खोवत श्रीवल्लभ कौ रूप न जाने। जाकी कृपा कटाक्ष सफल फल 'कृष्णदास' तीनों जनम न

माने ॥२॥

Raag Sarang

Vallabh is known as the uplifter of the fallen. taking them into His shelter, revealing His

divine play, upon such souls stands the Lord of Govardhan. □1□

Wasting days performing fruitless practices, they do not know the form of Shri Vallabh.

by whose gracious sidelong glance all becomes fulfilled —
‘Krishnadas’ says, even three

lifetimes cannot repay it. □2□

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So this verse Krishnadas sang, and hearing it Shri Acharyaji himself became very pleased. After that, Shri Acharyaji conducted the consecration of Shri Govardhannathji. Then the temple was completed. On the beautiful day of Akshay Tritiya, Shri Govardhannathji was seated on the new temple throne. Then all the desires of Purnamal were fulfilled. Then Shri Acharyaji himself called Sadu Pandey and said: “The temple has become very large, for Shri Govardhannathji has been installed. But now a proper person is needed to perform His seva. Therefore, you should do the seva.”

Then Sadu Pandey made a request: “Maharaj! We are residents of Braj. We do not understand the discipline, conduct, and devotion required for seva. And we have many household responsibilities. If you permit, then on top of Radhakund there are Bengalis living there. They perform bhajan eight watches of the day. If they may be appointed, then please call them.” Then Shri Acharyaji said: “Bring them.”

So Sadu Pandey brought twenty–twenty-five Bengalis. Then Shri Acharyaji had small huts made for them on Rudrakund and gave them the seva of Shri Govardhannathji. And Krishnadas was appointed to receive offerings brought from foreign lands and give those offerings to the Bengalis. In this way, he would perform the seva. Thus, by teaching all the Bengalis the proper methods, the seva was entrusted to them. And when Krishnadas brought offerings from distant places, he gave them to the Bengalis. When the new temple was built, the Rajput Ramdas Chauhan left his body and attained entry into the divine pastimes. After that, all seva was performed by the Bengalis.

Prasang 1 – Krishnadas Visits Dwarika

Later, once Krishnadas went toward Shri Dwarikaji to receive offerings. He took darshan of Shri Ranchhodji in Shri Dwarika and was returning after receiving offerings from Vaishnavas. A Vaishnav was traveling with Krishnadas. On the way, they arrived at the village

of Mirabai. So Krishnadasji went to Mirabai's house. Many saints, mahants, various swamis, and people following different paths were sitting there. Some had been there ten days, some twenty days, but none had been given leave to go. They were all sitting to give their offerings. Krishnadas, upon arriving, said immediately: "I will be going now." Then Mirabai said: "Please stay for a few days out of kindness."

Then Krishnadas said: "We stay only where our Vaishnavs, the sevaks of Shri Acharyaji, live. We do not stay with those of other paths." Then Mirabai offered eleven gold coins as an offering for Shri Nathji, but Krishnadas did not accept them. And Krishnadas said to Mirabai: "You are not a sevak of Shri Acharyaji. Therefore, we will not let your coins even touch our hands." Saying this, he stood up and left. Then the Vaishnav who was accompanying him said to Krishnadas: "Why did you refuse the offering meant for Shri Govardhannathji?"

Then Krishnadas said to that Vaishnav: "Where is the lack of offering? Shri Govardhannathji receives countless offerings from Vaishnavas. There is no shortage of anything in the house of Shri Govardhannathji. But where else will so many masters of various paths and mahants be found gathered together? By refusing her offering, their pride will be humbled. They will understand that they have been sitting here many days to give offerings, while a single sevak of Shri Acharyaji, a shudra, refused to take even eleven gold coins. Those whose sevaks are so steadfast—what can be said about the greatness of their Guru? All these people will understand this. And why should we accept offerings from those of a different path?"

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Therefore, in the Shikshapatra it is said: "The greatest sorrow for the Bhagvadiya (belonging to Bhagwan) is association with one of a different nature."

For those who are Bhagvadiya, there is no other sorrow. As much sorrow as association with one of a different path, so much sorrow arises. Shri Thakurji tolerates everything, but only when one does not speak with those of a different path is there true peace. If conversation occurs, then the rasa becomes concealed and a false semblance of rasa certainly arises. Therefore, Krishnadasji at least had to go to the house of Mirabai. Through this event, the main principle was shown: one should not meet anyone who is not of one's own path. And if by chance one must meet them, then one should keep one's own dharma concealed. Thus Shri Gusainji himself has said in the Chatushloki –

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" वजातीयजनाकीण नजधमस्य गोपनं। देशे वधाय सततं स्थय मत्येव मे म तः" ॥१॥

"In a place filled with people of a different nature, the concealment of one's own dharma,

established constantly in that land, this alone is my view." 1

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So, if one goes to such a country where there is no Vaishnav at all, and there he does not reveal his own dharma, then his own dharma remains preserved. Why is this so? Because even in worldly affairs there is defilement. From that defilement, one who has bathed should save himself and go on. Therefore, noble people must protect themselves from all such entanglements. Just as excellent ingredients are protected with great care so that they remain fit to be offered as bhog to Shri Thakurji, in the same way, Vaishnav dharma is like that. If one protects this dharma, then it remains. This principle has been made clear. Thus, Krishnadas was so firm, a most worthy recipient of grace, and belonged fully to Bhagwan.

Prasang 2 – Adornment of Shri Govardhannathji and the

Bengalis

And the adornment (shringar) of Shri Govardhannathji was done by the Bengalis. Shri Acharyaji had arranged all the mina (enamel) ornaments for Shri Govardhannathji. He had also had the peacock-feather crown, the waistcloth, and the garments made. The Bengalis were doing the seva of Shri Govardhannathji. Whatever offerings came for Shri Govardhannathji, the Bengalis began collecting them and sending everything to their own gurus. When Shri Acharyaji appointed Krishnadas as the officer in charge (Adhikari) at the temple of Shri Govardhannathji, then Krishnadas started bringing materials and supplies from Mathura and Agra.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): There was also an Avadhutdas, a sevak of Shri Acharyaji, who used to wander in Braj. He was a great recipient of grace and belonged fully to Bhagwan. He lived in Ading. Avadhutdasji is counted among the group of unmarried girls (kumarikā) in the divine play. In the Ras Panchadhyayi, when Shri Thakurji manifested, these devotees perceived his true form, closed their eyes, and became absorbed like yogis. This devotee's

manifestation is as Avadhutdasji. In the divine play his name is "Ketini".

He was born in the house of a "Sanodhya" Brahmin in Ading. When a famine occurred in Braj, his mother and father gave the boy to a merchant as a son and themselves went toward the East. Later, when Avadhutdas was fifteen years old, he left the merchant's house and came to Mathura. There he took the darshan of Shri Acharyaji and made a request: "Maharaj! Please give me refuge." Then Shri Acharyaji said: "Come with us to Shri Govardhan. We will take refuge in the presence of Shri Nathji."

So Avadhutdas came with Shri Acharyaji to Shri Giriraj. Then Shri Acharyaji said to Avadhutdas: "You go and bathe in Govindkund." Avadhutdas went and bathed in Govindkund. Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji himself bathed in Govindkund and then went to the temple. At that time, the Rajbhog of Shri Govardhandhar was taking place. When the time came for after-bhog relaxation, Shri Acharyaji called Avadhutdas, seated him in the presence of Shri Govardhandhar, and had him perform the offering of his name (name-surrender).

Then Avadhutdas requested Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! In my heart I desire to carry Shri Govardhannathji in my heart and wander in Braj." Then Shri Acharyaji took water in his hand and sprinkled it over Avadhutdas. Immediately Avadhutdasji attained a supernatural body. Hunger, thirst, bodily sense of "I am this body," and all obstacles no longer troubled him. He became absorbed in mental (manasi) seva. Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji performed the Rajbhog Aarti. And Avadhutdas went about Braj constantly, holding the form of Shri Govardhandhar in his heart from toenails to the top of the head. He remained always absorbed in the bliss of that form.

In this way, many days passed. Then one day Shri Govardhannathji revealed to Avadhutdas: "Tell Krishnadas Adhikari that these Bengalis must be removed. I wish to increase my own manifested glory. These Bengalis are placing bhog before me. In the tuft of their hair (choti) is the form of a goddess. When they place bhog before me, that goddess comes out of their choti and they seat her near me. This does not please me. Therefore, quickly remove these Bengalis." Avadhutdas kept this matter in his heart.

One day Krishnadas was going from Shri Govardhan to Mathura for supplies. On the way, Avadhutdas asked Krishnadas: "Where are you going?" Krishnadas said to Avadhutdas: "I am going to Mathura. Some materials are needed." Then Avadhutdas asked: "Who is doing the

seva of Shri Nathji?" Krishnadas replied: "The Bengalis are doing the seva."

Then Avadhutdas said to Krishnadas: "It is the wish of Shri Govardhannathji that the Bengalis be removed. The form of a goddess is in the Bengalis' choti. When they place bhog before Shri Nathji, that goddess comes out of the choti, and they seat her near him. This does not please Shri Govardhannathji. Therefore, quickly remove the Bengalis. He has given me this command himself, so I am telling you."

Then Krishnadas said: "The Bengalis were appointed by Shri Acharyaji. Therefore, if Shri Gusainji gives the order, they can be removed." Then Avadhutdas said: "You go to Adel and bring Shri Gusainji's order. Then, in whatever way possible, remove these Bengalis." So Krishnadas, who had been on his way to Mathura, turned from Ading and came back to Shri Govardhan. Coming there, he said to all the Bengalis: "I am going to Adel to see Shri Gusainji; there is some work to be done."

Then he said to all the sevaks, porters, and residents of Braj: "You all remain alert. I am going to Adel to Shri Gusainji." Then, taking leave of Shri Govardhannathji, Krishnadas went to Adel. In fifteen days, Krishnadas reached Adel and came before Shri Gusainji. He offered obeisance to Shri Gusainji. Then Shri Gusainji asked: "Krishnadas! Why have you left the seva of Shri Nathji and come here?"

Krishnadas said: "Shri Govardhannathji wishes to increase his own glory, and in the Bengalis' choti there is a goddess, whom they seat beside him at Rajbhog time. And all the offerings that come, they send everything to their gurus in Vrindavan. Now they do not recognize anyone. If the Bengalis remain there for many more days, quarrels will arise. Therefore, please give the order to remove the Bengalis. I will go and carry it out."

Then Shri Gusainji said to Krishnadas: "Shri Gopinathji had previously made a foreign tour to the East. From there, an offering of one lakh rupees came. Gopinathji first came to Adel and said: 'This first offering from foreign lands belongs to Shri Govardhannathji.' Saying this, Gopinathji took the one lakh rupees and came to Shriji's door. There, plates and bowls of pure gold were made for Shri Nathji. Then, after completing the seva and adornment, Shri Gopinathji came back to Adel. After that, all the Bengalis together sent all those gold plates, bowls, and wealth to their gurus in Vrindavan. All this news came to us, but what could we do? The Bengalis were appointed by Shri Acharyaji. So how could the Bengalis be removed?

Then Krishnadas said: “Maharaj! It is the desire of Shri Govardhannathji that the Bengalis be removed. Therefore, you should not speak further in this matter. I will, in whatever way possible, remove the Bengalis.” Then Shri Gusainji said: “Certainly, the Bengalis must be removed. If they remain for long, they will cause quarrels.” Then Krishnadas said: “Maharaj! Please write two letters for me—one in the name of Raja Todarmal and one in the name of Raja Birbal.”

Then Shri Gusainji himself wrote two letters: “Krishnadas is at Shri Govardhan. Whatever he tells you, do it. We wish to remove the Bengalis and appoint sevaks. Krishnadas is the Adhikari of Shri Govardhannathji, so whatever he does will be regarded by us as valid.” Writing this, Shri Gusainji gave both letters to Krishnadas. Then Krishnadas bowed to Shri Gusainji and departed. In a few days he reached Agra. There he showed the two letters bearing Shri Gusainji’s own signature to Raja Todarmal and Birbal. They said: “Whatever you say, we will do.”

Then Krishnadas said: “Now I am going to Shrinathji’s door to remove the Bengalis. It may be that the Bengalis’ guru in Shri Vrindavan will appeal to the ruler of the land. In that case, please protect the proper side.” Both of them said: “You go. Do whatever Shri Gusainji has ordered you. We will uphold what is right.”

Then Krishnadas left Agra, came to Mathura, and from Mathura came to Shri Govardhan. There, on the way, Avadhutdas met him. Avadhutdas said: “Krishnadas! Why have you delayed? Shri Nathji wishes to increase his own glory. Therefore, quickly remove the Bengalis. This is the wish of Shri Govardhandhar.” Then Krishnadas said: “I have brought Shri Gusainji’s command, and now I am going at once to remove the Bengalis.” Saying this, Krishnadas went on and came to Shrinathji’s door. Then he went up to Rudrakund and had fire set to the Bengalis’ huts.

There was an uproar. All the Bengalis left the seva of Shri Nathji, came down from the hill to their huts, and began to extinguish the fire. Meanwhile, Krishnadas had already seated his own men—two each from among the Brajwasis—at every place in the temple of Shri Govardhannathji. He said: “If any Bengali tries to climb up the hill, do not let him go up.” And he told the Brahmin sevaks inside: “You remain alert in the seva of Shri Nathji.” Then, saying this, Krishnadas stood below the hill, holding a staff in his hand.

After the Bengalis had extinguished the fire, they all came and began to climb up the hill toward the temple. Then Krishnadas said to those

Bengalis: “From now on, you have no work in the seva. We have appointed other sevaks who have gone to perform the seva.” Then the Bengalis prepared for a fight and said: “He is our Thakur. Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu appointed us. Why have you driven us out?” Then there was a fight. In the end, Krishnadas drove the Bengalis away, and they all fled.

Then they came to Mathuraji and told everything to Rup-Sanatan: “Krishnadas is of the shudra caste. He has burned down all our huts. He beat everyone and drove us all out from the seva.” As they were speaking this way, at that very time Krishnadas also arrived in Shri Mathuraji, riding on a chariot and bringing fifty Brajwasis armed with weapons. First, he went to Rup-Sanatan. Rup-Sanatan, annoyed, said to Krishnadas: “Hey you, shudra! Why did you beat these Brahmins? When the ruler of the land hears of this, what answer will you give?”

Krishnadas replied: “I am indeed a shudra. But I do not keep Brahmins as my sevaks. You yourselves are not fire-sacrifice-performing (agnihotri) Brahmins. You are also Kayasthas. Being Kayasthas, you are making these Brahmins bow to you and serve you as your sevaks. So you too will suffer greatly when it comes time to give an answer. You will not be able to answer. And I will be able to give my answer. If you wish, then come and see. See for yourself whether you can answer, and how you are acting.”

Hearing these words of Krishnadas, Rup-Sanatan said: “You know, and they know. We do not know anything.” In this way, Rup-Sanatan, who were the gurus of all those Bengalis, spoke. Then all the Bengalis, disappointed, went to the authority (Hakim) of Mathura and said: “Krishnadas has removed us from the seva of Shri Govardhannathji. Please, in some way, have us reinstated.”

As they were speaking this, Krishnadas also came before the authority. Seeing the radiance and force of Krishnadas, the authority stood up, greeted him, seated him nearby, and said: “You are a great person and the Adhikari of Shri Govardhannathji. Please forgive these Bengalis’ fault. What has happened has happened. Now take them back so they may do the seva.”

Then Krishnadas said: “Now we will not keep them. They are no longer our sevaks. These sevaks went so far as to prepare for a fight. If only their huts had burned, we would have had their huts rebuilt. But why did they all leave the seva of Shri Govardhannathji and come down from the hill? Therefore, they have no more work in the seva. And you are telling me to keep them. We will write about this matter

to Shri Gusainji. Whatever he says, we will do." Then the authority said: "Very well. You write to Shri Gusainji." Then Krishnadas returned to Shrinathji's door. After that, the Bengalis lived in Vrindavan.

Later, once again, all the Bengalis gathered, went to the ruler of the land in Agra, and spoke ill of Krishnadas. Then the ruler of the land, Emperor Akbar, said: "Who is this Krishnadas who has removed these Brahmins from worship? Call him here." At that point Raja Todarmal and Birbal said to Emperor Akbar, "They (Todarmal and Birbal) said: 'Shri Govardhannathji Thakur belongs to Shri Viddalnathji Shri Gusainji. Earlier, these Bengalis were kept in seva, so they were given expenses. Now they have been removed.'"

Then the ruler of the land said: "The Bengalis are slandering falsely. Who has any claim on a sevak? Therefore, call Krishnadas and tell him that if he wishes to keep them, he may keep them." Then the ruler's men came to Shri Giriraj to take Krishnadas with them. But Krishnadas had already heard beforehand, so he climbed onto a chariot, took ten to twenty men with him, and went to Agra along with the ruler's men. There Krishnadas met Raja Todarmal and Birbal. Raja Todarmal and Birbal said: "The Bengalis had complained, and we have already spoken. And we will again say today what we said before. You stay here today." So Krishnadas stayed there.

Then Raja Todarmal and Birbal, at the time of court, came before the ruler of the land and said to Akbar: "Krishnadas, the Adhikari of Shri Govardhannathji, has come. He does not wish to keep the Bengalis. He has appointed other sevaks, and he has removed those Bengalis." Then the ruler of the land said: "Very well. Whoever he wishes to keep as sevaks, he may keep. What false dispute is there in this? Therefore, remove the Bengalis." Then Raja Todarmal and Birbal went and said to the Bengalis: "The ruler of the land has ordered that you be removed. Therefore, be quiet and leave. If you quarrel, you will suffer. We have already explained this to you." Then all the Bengalis, disappointed, departed and went away. They lived in Vrindavan. And Krishnadas, taking leave of Raja Todarmal and Birbal, came back and went up to Giriraj.

After that, he called two messengers and wrote a petition letter to Shri Gusainji. In it he wrote: "The Bengalis have been removed by your order. For this, an answer has already been given to the ruler of the land, so the quarrel has now ended. And the Bengalis have fallen from favor in the royal court by their false complaint. Therefore, now please bestow your grace and come." The two pairs of messengers

went to Shri Gusainji. Shri Gusainji read the letter and quickly came from Adel, arriving at Shrinathji's door. There he called Krishnadas and, in the presence of Shri Govardhannathji, put a ceremonial shawl (dushala) on the Adhikari.

And Shri Gusainji himself said from his holy mouth: "Krishnadas! You have done great seva. This work could only be accomplished by you, that you removed the Bengalis. Therefore, now you alone shall manage all authority of Shri Govardhannathji. If we make any mistake, you must tell us. Do not keep any hesitation in any matter. Over all sevaks and attendants, your command alone shall stand. Who else is there? You have done such seva that whatever you ask from Shri Govardhannathji, that He will do. You are a recipient of Shri Acharyaji's grace, so whoever follows your command, good will come to them. Therefore, now you perform the seva of Shri Govardhannathji in the best possible way. Remain alert."

After that, Krishnadas offered full prostration (sastang dandvat) to Shri Gusainji and Shri Govardhannathji and began to perform all the duties of authority and seva. From that day on, the official seat (gaddi) of authority for Shrinathji began to be spread. By Shri Gusainji's order, Krishnadas sat on the gaddi. Afterwards, the Bengalis heard that Shri Gusainji had come to Shri Govardhan and was doing the adornment (shringar). So all the Bengalis together came to Shri Gusainji. Then, after offering their pleas, they said: "We were appointed by Shri Acharyaji in the seva of Shri Govardhannathji, but Krishnadas removed us. Therefore, please keep us again in the seva."

Then Shri Gusainji said: "You all left the seva of Shrinathji and came down from the hill. The fault is yours. And now it is not the wish of Shri Govardhannathji to keep you. Therefore, you cannot be retained." Then all the Bengalis began to beg greatly: "Do not make us do seva of Shrinathji now, but where should we go now? After the seva of Shrinathji, all our food and happiness were provided. Show us some other seva and work. Or show us some other Shri Thakurji by whose seva our livelihood may continue."

Then Shri Gusainji entrusted them with Shri Madan Mohanji, the Thakur who is served by Shri Gopinathji, and said: "You do His seva." So then the Bengalis took Shri Madan Mohanji and came to Shri Vrindavan and began to do seva there.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why was this done? Because Baldevji is in the form of maryada (regulative principle). Therefore, the Thakur whom he serves is also in the form of maryada. The

Bengalis' worship is of maryada type. So they were given such a Thakur. And Shri Gusainji also ended the quarrel. After that, Shri Gusainji appointed Santhora Gujarati Brahmins for the inner seva. The chief inner sevak was made to be Ramdas.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): This Brahmin Ramdas lived in Santhora, Gujarat. In the divine play, he is a sakhi of Shri Chandravliji. In the lila his name is "Manorama". He has sattvic bhava, obedient to Shri Chandravliji's command. Just as Shri Swaminiji, in Shri Thakurji's lila, has Lalita Madhyaji as the supremely clever one, so by the grace of Shri Govardhannathji, Krishnadas, in the form of Lalita, gives commands everywhere. In the same way, in the form of Manorama, Ramdas, as chief inner sevak, does all the service in front of Shri Gusainji.

This (Manorama) Ramdas was born in Gujarat in the house of a Santhora Brahmin. When he was about twenty years old, his mother and father left their bodies. After that, Ramdas went to take darshan of Shri Ranchhodji. There he had darshan of Shri Acharyaji, who at that time was giving a discourse. Hearing the discourse from Shri Acharyaji's own holy mouth, knowledge arose in Ramdas's heart: "Shri Acharyaji himself is the direct form of God. If one remains in his refuge, one becomes fulfilled." This firm resolve formed in his mind.

After Shri Acharyaji finished the discourse, Ramdas offered obeisance and made a request: "Maharaj! Please take me into your refuge." Then Shri Acharyaji said: "Go and take a bath, then come." Ramdas went and bathed. Then Shri Acharyaji had Ramdas perform the ceremony of name-surrender. After that, Shri Acharyaji said to Ramdas: "Now you do Bhagvat-seva (seva of Bhagwan)." Then Ramdas said: "The Thakur of my father is with me. If you give the order, then I will do seva of Him." Then Shri Acharyaji himself had Ramdas's Shri Thakurji bathed with Panchamrit. After that, Ramdas remained for some days with Shri Acharyaji and learned the proper methods and ways of seva.

Then Ramdas made a request to Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! I have not studied the shastras, but I have the desire and longing to study your Granths." Then Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu taught his Granths to Ramdas. When Ramdasji read them, the lila of Braj manifested in his heart. Ramdas then sang this kirtan before Shri Acharyaji. The verse:

राग गौरी -

च ल सखी च ल अहो बज पेंठ लगी है जहां बकात ह र – रस प्रेम। सूठ सोंघो प्रानन के पलटे उलट धरो िजय नेम

॥।१॥

और भां त पाइवौ अ त दुलभ को टक खच हेम। 'रामदास प्रभु' रत्न अमो लक सखी पैयत है एम ॥२॥

Raag Gauri

Come friend, come, for in the bazaar a stall has appeared where the nectar of Hari's love

is being sold. With true fragrance it overturns the life-breath, and the heart's resolve is

turned upside down. □1□

In no other way can such a thing be obtained — it is rarer than heaps of crores of gold.

'Ramdas Prabhu' says — this priceless jewel, friend, is being given here. □2□

✿✿✿

In this way, Ramdas sang many rasa-filled, nectar-like verses. Hearing them, Shri Acharyaji himself became very pleased. Then Ramdas took leave of Shri Acharyaji, offered obeisance, and returned to his home in Gujarat, where he did seva for many years. After that, one day a Vaishnav came to Ramdas's house. Ramdas lovingly kept the Vaishnav in his home. Then Ramdas said: "The company of a Vaishnav is rare. You have shown great kindness by coming to my home."

Then the Vaishnav said: "The one truly worthy of keeping company with is Padmanabhdasji. If one has even a moment of association with him, Bhagwan's grace is obtained." Hearing this, the thought arose in Ramdasji's mind: "I should have the company of Padmanabhdas." After staying four days, that Vaishnav went away. Then Ramdasji, taking his Shri Thakurji along, came to Padmanabhdas's house in Kannauj. Padmanabhdas lovingly kept Ramdas for a month, and they both became absorbed in talks of Bhagwan.

Then Ramdasji said: "Just as I had heard of your greatness, in the same way I have received happiness from your company. Now I will go and take darshan of Shri Govardhannathji. Please keep my Thakur

with you." Then Padmanabhdasji seated Ramdas's Thakur, Shri Mathureshji, near his own resting place (bed). And here, Shri Gusainji himself, being pleased, made Ramdas the chief (mukhya). So, for his entire life, Ramdas did the seva of Shrinathji with full concentration. In this way Ramdasji lived. Later, when Padmanabhdasji left his body, Ramdas placed his Shri Thakurji near Shri Govardhannathji. So that Thakur remained always beside Shrinathji. After that, Shri Gusainji extended and expanded the seva of Shri Govardhannathji. Royal-style service (rajseva) began to be done: fixed allowances (neg) were set for bhog materials; many sevaks were appointed; the tailor, the goldsmith, the carpenter, all were given fixed allowances. A storekeeper (bhandari, an Adhikari) was appointed; the bhandari was given a seat and cushion (gaddi-takiya). In this way, the lordly majesty (Ishvarata) of Shri Govardhannathji was increased.

And over all the sevaks, Krishnadas Adhikari was made the chief, so that every matter should be decided by consulting him. Shri Gusainji himself would simply perform seva and shringar and go, and would not say anything to anyone. If any sevak asked Shri Gusainji about something, Shri Gusainji would say: "Go to Krishnadas Adhikari. I do not know." In this way, the proper order (maryada) was maintained.

In this manner, Krishnadas had great glory and great authority. Wherever he traveled, there were chariots, horses, oxen, camels, carts, and a hundred or a hundred and fifty people with him. Krishnadas Adhikari became famous in all regions. Krishnadas daily composed new verses and sang them to Shri Govardhandhar. He was such a recipient of grace and belonged entirely to Bhagwan.

Prasang 3 – Ras at Parasoli with Shyam Kumhar

And one day, Shri Govardhannathji gave Krishnadas this command: "Take Shyam Kumhar along with his mridang, and after the 'Sen Aarti' go to Parasoli. There we will perform Ras-lila." Then, offering obeisance (dandvat) to Shri Govardhannathji, Krishnadas came down from the hill. After that, Shri Govardhannathji said to Shyam Kumhar: "Wherever Krishnadas tells you, there you should go with your mridang." In this way, Shrinathji himself gave this order to Shyam Kumhar.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Shrinathji himself gave this order to Shyam Kumhar because, in the divine lila, Shyam Kumhar is a sakhi of Vishakhaji. In the lila her name is "Rasatarangini". Her seva is to play the mridang.

Once, Rasatarangini had gone to sleep, and Vishakhaji felt like singing. So Vishakhaji woke Rasatarangini and said: “You play the mridang.” Then Rasatarangini began to play the mridang. But due to sleepiness, Rasatarangini made mistakes. Then Vishakhaji, becoming angry, said: “How are you playing today?” Rasatarangini replied: “I am feeling sleepy, and your heart desires to sing—how can that work?” Then Vishakhaji took the mridang herself and, in anger, said to Rasatarangini: “You are not my sakhi. Go and take birth on earth.” Because Rasatarangini had spoken proudly, this was her punishment.

So Rasatarangini took birth in Mahavan in the house of a potter (kumhar). He became known as Shyam Kumhar. He was very clever in the entire community. Shri Gusainji himself called him and kept him near Shri Navanitpriyaji. Then Shyam Kumhar was given name-surrender. Later, when the glory of Shri Govardhannathji increased, the thought arose in Krishnadas’s mind that a mridang-player was needed. Then Shri Govardhandhar said: “In Gokul there is Shyam Kumhar. He plays mridang very well. Tell Shri Gusainji and keep him here.” Then Krishnadas said to Shri Gusainji: “Keep Shyam Kumhar in the seva of Shri Govardhandhar. This is the Lord’s wish.”

Then Shri Gusainji himself called Shyam Kumhar from Shri Gokul and kept him in the seva of Shrinathji. From that day on, Shyam Kumhar played the mridang in front of Shrinathji. In this way, Shyam Kumhar lived at Shri Giriraj. Then Krishnadas called Shyam Kumhar and said: “It is the wish of Shri Govardhannathji to perform Ras in Parasoli today. So bring your mridang. We will go after the Sen Aarti.” Then Shyam Kumhar said: “He has already given me the command. So I have come to you with the mridang.”

When the Sen Aarti of Shri Govardhannathji was completed, Krishnadas took Shyam Kumhar and went to Parasoli, to the place of Chandrasarovar. There they saw Shri Govardhandhar and Shri Swaminiji seated with all the sakhis. Then Shri Govardhandhar said to Shyam Kumhar: “You play the mridang.” And he said to Krishnadas: “You sing kirtan.”

It was the full-moon day of Chaitra, the 15th of the bright fortnight. In the night, a watch and a half had passed; the light had spread, and it became a wondrous, divine night. Then Shyam Kumhar played the mridang. Beautiful flowers of the spring season were blooming on the creepers. Then Shri Govardhandhar, together with Shri Swaminiji, began to dance. At that time, Krishnadas sang this verse. The verse:

✿✿✿

राग केदारो -

श्रीवृषभाननंदनी नाचत लाल ग रधरन संग, लाग डाट उरप तरप रास रंग राच्यौ । झप ताल मल्यो राग केदारो

सप्त सुरन अवघट-अवघट सुघरतान गान रंग राच्यो ॥१॥

पाई सुख सुर त सद् ध भरत काम व वध रद् ध अ भनव वदन सम सुहाग हुलास रंग राच्यो। ब नता सत-जूथप

पय नर ख थक्यो सघन चंद ब लहारी 'कृष्णदास' सुघर रंग राख्यो ॥२॥

Raag Kedaro

Shri Vrishbhanu-nandini dances with Lal Giridhar, and with playful twists of the waist

the rasa-color is woven. With the snapping of rhythm the beat joins, and in Raag Kedaro,

The seven notes, difficult and subtle, create a graceful melody of song and color. □1□

Joy is attained, awareness is filled, perfection arises, and many kinds of prosperities;

upon the fresh beauty of Her face the glow of good fortune spreads, and the color of

delight is woven. The women of the groups stand watching their beloved, the dense

moon is humbled before Him. ‘Krishnadas’ says — this beautiful color of rasa has been

preserved. □2□

✿✿✿

Hearing this verse, Shri Govardhandhar became pleased and gave from His own divine neck a prasadi garland of white jasmine (kund) flowers. Krishnadas considered this to be his supreme good fortune, and every pore of his body was filled with bliss. Then, absorbed in rasa, he sang this verse. The verse:

✿✿✿

राग मालव-

(१)

अलग लागन उरप तरप ग त नटवत ् ब्रजललना राखें। उघटत सब्द ततथेइ ततथेइ मृगनयनी इषद हासे ॥१॥

भाल चंद लजावत गावत बांधत मदन ओह पासे। चलत उरज क ट कं कनी कुंडल श्रमजल-कन सो भत आसे ॥२॥

नूपुर कु नत क्व णत क टमेखला क टतट काछे नील सुवासे। अवघट तानमान बंधाने मो हत वश्व चरन न्यासे ॥३॥

मोहनलाल गोवद्धनधारी रझवत छेल सुघर लासे। अपने कंठ की श्रमजल दल मल माला दे त 'कृष्णदास' ॥४॥।

(२)

ततथेई रासमंडल में बने नाचत पयके संग प्रीतमप्यारी। गावत सरस सुजात मलवत चपल कु टल भह अ नयारी

॥१॥

मालव राग अलाप त भा मनी ले त उरप नागर नारी। प्यारी के संग वेनु बजावत सुघरराय श्रीगोवद्धनधारी ॥२॥

'कृष्णदास' प्रभु सौभग सींवा सब युव तन में सुकुमारी। जोरी अभुत प्रग टत भूतल के लकलारस मनुहारी ॥३॥

(३)

चंद गो वंद गोपी तारा गन बने रास में बनवारी। मुख प्रताप रंिजत वृंदावन नवल युव तजन सुखकारी ॥१॥

कमलनयन कमनीय मनोहर मनहरनी गोकुलनारी। हस्तकमल पर ग लत कुसुमदल नृत्यमान प्रीतम प्यारी ॥२॥

रसमयरास - र सक न भा मनी अ तरसाल बने बहारी। 'कृष्णदास' प्रभु र सक शरोम न र सकराय ग रवरधारी

॥३॥

(४)

सखव त ह रकों मुरली बजावत । सप्त रध पर धरत अंगुली दल कंघ बाहू ध रमधुरे गावत ॥१॥

सरसभेद ग त राग कान्हरो ग त बलासवर नयन नचायत । 'कृष्णदास' ब ल ब ल वैभवकी ग रधर

भावत ॥ २॥

Raag Malav

(1)

A different kind of movement, with twists of the waist, the Braj maidens keep,

as the sound bursts forth, “tatthai tatthai,” and the doe-eyed ones smile slightly. □1□

The moon on the forehead is shamed, singing and binding the arrows of Madan near

Him. As She moves, the waist-bells ring, the earrings shine, and drops of perspiration

beautify Her. □2□

The anklets ring, the girdle jingles, the blue fragrance clings to the sides of Her waist.

with difficult melodies and rhythms bound together, the whole world becomes

enchanted at the placing of their feet. □3□

Mohanlal, the Govardhan-dharan, charms with graceful playful dancing. He gives the

garland moistened by the drops of sweat from His own neck, says ‘Krishnadas’. □4□

(2)

“Tatthai-ee” — in the Raas-circle She dances, formed along with Her beloved, the

dearmost one sings sweetly, uniting with Him, Her playful crooked glances

incomparable. □1□

In Raag Malav the maiden sings, taking to Her heart the gallant lover.

With His beloved

by His side, the flute is played by the graceful king, Shri Govardhandharan. □2□

‘Krishnadas’ says — among all maidens She is the most delicate,

the treasure of good fortune; Her wondrous form manifests on earth, a delight of playful

rasa. □3□

(3)

The moon is Govind, the stars are the Gopis, and Braj’s Banwari becomes the center of

the Raas. The radiance of His face colors Vrindavan, bringing joy to the young maidens.

□1□

The lotus-eyed, charming, delightful Gokul maiden enchants the mind. On Her

lotus-hand rests a wilted flower petal, as She dances with Her beloved. □2□

In the rasa filled with nectar, the lover-maiden becomes supremely sweet, and Bihari

shines. ‘Krishnadas’ says — the Lord is the crest-jewel of rasikas, the king of lovers, the

bearer of Govardhan. □3□

(4)

She teaches Hari how to play the flute.

placing the fingers on the seven notes, holding His arm, She sings sweetly. □1□

With delightful movements, in Raag Kanharo, the playful lord enchants with dancing

eyes. ‘Krishnadas’ says — I am offered again and again to this

splendor;

Giridhar, beloved and dear, pleases the heart. □2□

✿✿✿

In this way, Krishnadasji sang many kirtans. Then Shyam Kumhar played the mridang very beautifully. Shri Govardhandhar and Shri Swaminiji, along with all the Braj devotees, performed a wondrous dance nearby. Such was the grace that Shri Govardhandhar bestowed upon Krishnadas by the earful command of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. After that, Shri Govardhandhar, together with Shri Swaminiji and all the Braj devotees, became invisible. Then Krishnadas and Shyam Kumhar, taking the mridang, came to Gopalpur. There Krishnadas sang the kirtans appropriate to each occasion.

Prasang 4 – The Challenge from Surdas

And one day Surdasji said to Krishnadas: “Krishnadas! In all the kirtans you have composed, my shadow is present.” Then Krishnadas said: “Now I will compose such a verse that not even a trace of your shadow will appear in it.” After that, Krishnadas sat alone in seclusion and began to think with concentrated mind: “I should sing of a pastime which Surdas has not sung.” He reflected on the lilas, but whichever lila he considered, that very lila had already been sung by Surdasji. About gifts (daan), honor (maan), and descriptions of singing —every kind of lila had been sung by Surdasji.

Thus Krishnadas became weary from thinking. Great worry arose in his mind. One watch (approximately three hours) passed in Krishnadasji’s struggle. Defeated in thought, he stood up. Taking paper, writing instruments, and pen in his hand, he went to receive Mahaprasad. Then Shri Govardhandhar came and completed the verse. The verse:

✿✿✿

राग गोरी -

आवत बन कान्ह गोप– बालक संग नेचुकी खुर-रेनु छु रत अलकावली । मह मन्मथ – चाप वक्रलोचन बान सीस

सो भत मत्त मयूरचंद्रावली ॥१॥

उ दत उडुराजा सुंदर सरोम न बदन नर ख फूली नवल जुव त कुमुदावली। अरुन सकु चत अधर

बंब फल हसत कछू

प्रगट होत कुंद दसनावली ॥२॥

श्रवन कुंडल भाल तलक बेस र नाक, कंठ कौस्तुभम न सुभ त्रवलावली। रत्न हाटक ख चत उर स प दक न पां त,

बीच राज त सुभ्र झलक मुक्तावली ॥३॥

वलय कंकन बाजूबंद आजानुभुज मु द्रका कर-दल बराज त नखावली ॥। कु नत कर मुर लका मो हत अ खल वश्व

गो पका जन-मन स ग्र थत प्रेमावली ॥४॥

क ट छुद्र घं टका ज टत हीराम न ना भ अंबुज व लत ग रोमावली। धाइकबहुक चलत भक्त हत जा न पय गंड

मं डत रु चर श्रमजल कणावली॥५॥

पीत कौशेय प रधान सुंदर अंग चलत नूपुर गी सब्दावली। हदय 'कृष्णदास' ग रधरनलाल की चरन-नख- चं द्रका

हर त त मरावली ॥६॥

Raag Gauri –

Shri Krishna comes into the forest, surrounded by the cowherd boys. The dust from the

cows' hooves softly settles upon His curling locks. Upon His head shines a

peacock-feather crown, and His curved glances are like the arrows of Cupid himself. (1)

The rising moon of His face enchants all — as the youthful maidens bloom like fresh

lotuses upon beholding Him. His reddish lips, slightly curved in a smile, reveal rows of

white teeth like blossoming jasmine buds. (2)

Earrings grace His ears, a tilak adorns His forehead, a nose ornament shines upon His

nose, and the Kaustubha gem glows upon His neck. Around His chest

glisten lines of

sacred jewels and pearls, and in between them radiates a pure white strand of pearls. (3) Bracelets, bangles, armlets, and rings adorn His long arms; the nails on His hands gleam

like gems. In one curved hand He holds His flute — whose melody enchants the entire

universe and binds the hearts of the Gopis in a garland of divine love. (4)

At His waist hang tiny tinkling bells set with gems; near His navel the lotus-like folds of

His skin bear fine hairs like threads of gold. Running swiftly for the sake of His devotees,

His radiant cheeks shine with drops of loving sweat. (5)

He wears a yellow silk garment of the finest weave, and the sound of His anklets creates

a symphony as He moves. ‘Krishnadas’ says — the moonlight from the toenails of

Giridhar Gopal destroys all darkness from the hearts of His devotees. (6)

✿✿✿

Having written this verse, He Himself departed. Surdasji had never described the pastime of the “Nechuki” cow. The meaning of “Nechuki” is this: A cow, after giving birth for the first time, has very deep affection for her calf. Such a Nechuki cow does not allow the cowherd boys to come near her. She repeatedly runs back toward her calf at home. Into such a group of Nechuki cows, Shri Thakurji Himself had arrived. The dust from the hooves of the Nechuki cows had settled upon His face and on His curls. Shri Thakurji Himself wrote down one line of this on the paper and then departed.

After that, Krishnadas, receiving Mahaprasad with joy, came and completed the kirtan. In this way, after completing the kirtan, Krishnadasji—being pleased—came to Surdasji, laughing again and again. Then Surdasji asked: “Today you come laughing very joyfully—did you compose some new verse?” Then Krishnadas said: “Today I

have composed such a verse in which there is not even a shadow of your verses. It is a subject that you have not sung." Then Surdasji said: "Read it aloud to me so I may hear it."

Then Krishnadas spoke only the very first line. Hearing that very line spoken by Krishnadas, Surdasji said: "Krishnadas! You are arguing with me. You have no quarrel with my father. So what is there of yours in this? That which I have not sung about the Nechuki cow—the Lord Himself told you. And as for describing the limbs of Shri Ang (the Divine Form), I have thousands of verses. Those very descriptions you have sung and completed." Hearing these words of Surdasji, Krishnadas remained silent.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here a doubt arises: Krishnadasji is the form of Lalitaji, and Shri Govardhannathji supported Krishnadas, even composing the line of the verse for him—yet still Krishnadas could not equal Surdasji. What is the reason?

It is said: Krishnadas is in Lalita's form, and Surdasji is in Champakalata's form. But each has a different adhikar (role and right). In the divine lila, the service of Shri Lalitaji is supreme. In the same way here, in the type of seva concerning management, supervision, arrangement of all items, expansion of service—Krishnadas is supremely skilled.

Just as a goldsmith cannot do the work of a tailor, and a tailor cannot do the work of the goldsmith's ornaments, in the same way all are skilled only in their own kind of seva. And both these sakhis of Shri Swaminiji are dear. Therefore, Shri Govardhannathji's love is upon both. But in Krishnadas's mind, the slightest trace of pride arose, thinking: "I have composed many kirtans." Thus, Krishnadas was such a sevak, so greatly graced by Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu.

Prasang 5 – The Girl in Agra Singing

And once, in the temple of Shri Govardhannathji, some supplies were needed. Therefore, Krishnadas had a cart arranged, and he himself, riding on a chariot, came from Shri Govardhan to Agra. When he entered the market of Agra, there a courtesan (veshya) was teaching dance to her girl. That girl was extremely beautiful, about twelve years old, and her throat (voice) was also extremely sweet. She was very skilled in singing and dancing. That courtesan was singing khyal and tappa. The girl's singing reached Krishnadas's ears, and it entered his mind deeply. He was pleased. Then Krishnadas stopped his chariot there. Pushing aside the crowd, he looked at the form of that girl.

Hearing her song there, he became enchanted.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here a doubt arises: Krishnadas is a sevak beloved of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu, so why was he enchanted by the song of a courtesan? For he is one who is enchanted only by Shri Thakurji. To him even celestial apsaras seem insignificant. And Shri Acharyaji himself has said in the Jalabhed Granth that

'वेश्या दस हता मत्ता गायका गतसं झताः । जलाथमेव गतास्तु नीचा गानोपजी वनः ॥

Accompanied by prostitutes and others, the intoxicated singers remain sunk in pits, and

truly, the pits are only for drawing water, the low ones make their living by singing.

The song of low people such as courtesans, singers, bhaats, and doms is like the water of a pig's wallow. One who bathes in it or drinks it is as though drinking the rasa of the low. Such faults have been described by Shri Acharyaji. So how could Krishnadas—supremely wise, protector of maryada—be enamored by the song of a courtesan? If someone were to imitate him, he would become outward-turned. Krishnadas has appeared to give instruction to all and uplift them—so why would Krishnadas become pleased with a courtesan? This doubt arises; there the explanation is given:

Here the reason is different. That courtesan's girl was a divine lila-related soul, a sakhi of Lalitaji. In the lila her name is "Bahubhashini." One day Lalitaji was preparing materials for Shri Thakurji. Lalitaji said to Bahubhashini: "Go and grind the sugar (mishri) and bring it." So Bahubhashini filled a small container with mishri and went. While talking with another sakhi, some dust flew and fell into the mishri, but Bahubhashini did not realize it. Afterwards she brought the container of mishri to Lalitaji. Lalitaji, being extremely clever, understood immediately. Then Lalitaji said to Bahubhashini: "This material has become impure. The dust has fallen from your mouth." So it was by the will of Bhagwan.

Then Bahubhashini said: "You speak falsely. No dust has fallen. And in the circle of sakhis, Shri Thakurji accepts everyone's remnants as well." Then Lalitaji said: "What do you know of the Lord's lila?

Whatever the Lord, being pleased, does—that alone is fitting. But whatever inferior action a person performs from his own mind becomes corrupt. Therefore, you will be born in a lowly place." Then Bahubhashini said: "You too should take birth in the house of a shudra and uplift me. Where shall I go except to you?" In this way, a mutual curse took place.

Thus Krishnadas was born in the house of a shudra, and Bahubhashini took birth only in the house of a courtesan—but she never looked upon the face of any worldly man. So Shri Govardhandhar, by inspiring Krishnadas, sent him to Agra to accept that courtesan-girl. Therefore, in Krishnadas's heart, the singing of the courtesan seemed pleasing. Standing there, listening to the singing and dancing, he thought in his mind: "This talent is extremely excellent, and she is a divine soul, fit for Shri Govardhannathji. If Shri Govardhannathji Himself accepts her, that would be good."

Then Krishnadas, thinking thus, gave ten rupees to that courtesan and said: "Come to our camp at night." Saying this, Krishnadas went to the haveli where he always stayed and had the cart loaded with the required supplies. After that, when one watch of the night had passed, the courtesan came with her troupe. Then she danced and sang. Krishnadas became very pleased. Then Krishnadas gave that courtesan one hundred rupees.

And Krishnadas said to that courtesan: "Your form, singing, and dancing are all excellent. Tomorrow morning we will go to Shri Govardhan. Our master (Seth) is there. If you wish, you may come." Then the courtesan said: "This is exactly what I desire." Then she became very pleased in her mind, thinking: "If he has given me so much money, who knows how much the master will give?" She returned home, prepared her cart, arranged her musical instruments and dance items nicely, and placed everything upon the cart.

Then morning came. She came to Krishnadas. Afterwards, Krishnadas took that courtesan and departed. They reached Mathura. The next day they left Mathura and around midday arrived in Gopalpur. Then the courtesan was bathed and given new clothes to wear, and she wore them. Then Krishnadas thought in his mind: "She will sing khyal and tappa, and Shri Govardhandhar will listen. Therefore, I will teach her a verse." Then Krishnadas taught that courtesan one verse and said: "Sing this verse in Purvi raga." The verse:

राग पूव -

मेरो मन ग रधर छ ब पर अटक्यो। ल लत त्रभगी अंगन ऊपर च ल गयो तहां ही ठठक्यो ॥१॥

सजल स्यामघन नील बरन है फ र चत्त अनत न भटक्यो। 'कृष्णदास' कयो प्रान न्योछाव र यह तन जग सर

पटक्यो ॥२॥

Raga Purvi -

My mind has become fixed upon the beautiful form of Giridhar, it went up to the

graceful, threefold-bent form in the courtyard and there it stopped, standing motionless.

□1□

His complexion is like a moist dark rain-cloud of blue color, after that the mind does not

wander anywhere else. "Krishnadas" has offered up his very life, he has flung this body

down upon the world's head. □2□

✿✿✿

Krishnadas taught that courtesan the verse. After that, when the darshan of Utthapan was completed, then at the time of the Bhog darshan, Krishnadas took that courtesan, along with her troupe, up the hill.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): He took her at the time of Bhog because at the time of Utthapan, Shri Thakurji awakens in Nikunj. Therefore, Utthapan Bhog must come quickly. And Bhog darshan is when He comes on the path of Braj; at that time many devotees are accepted by Him. Therefore, this girl also had to be accepted. Thus, Krishnadas took the courtesan up the hill at the time of Bhog.

After that, when the doors of Bhog opened, that courtesan first performed a dance, and then began to sing. She sang the verse that Krishnadas had composed and taught her. When the second line came: “Kishnadas offered his life, This body threw itself upon the world’s head” While singing this line of the verse, the courtesan’s body fell

away, and she obtained a divine body and entered the lila. Then all the members of her troupe and the mother of the courtesan began to cry: “We earned our living through her. Now what shall we do?”

Then Krishnadas took them down and said: “What has happened has now happened. She had such a destiny. Who can speak about this matter? Now whatever you say, I will give you.” Then they said: “Give a thousand rupees—so we may live for some days. After that, whatever is to happen will happen.” Then Krishnadas gave one thousand rupees and sent them all away. In this way, Shri Govardhannathji, through the agency of Krishnadas, accepted the courtesan’s daughter.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here a doubt arises: How was lila-attainment achieved without the connection of Shri Acharyaji? Here it is said: In the heart of Krishnadas, Shri Acharyaji resides. Krishnadas taught the verse to the courtesan’s daughter—this was only the outward act. Through this verse, Shri Acharyaji established the relationship.

Therefore in the first line it is said: “My mind has become fixed on the beauty of Giridhar.” This establishes the entire dharma and the method of fixing the mind. The jiva, believing in his own independent existence, attaches his mind to wife, children, and body—but through this teaching, that attachment is surrendered. Someone may say, “The jiva has given everything, leaving his own identity, and holding that the Lord’s identity is everything. Therefore, for me, only Shri Krishna is the path.” Thus, in this verse it is said: My mind has become fixed on the beauty of Shri Govardhandhar—leaving everything else.

Understand that through Krishnadas, Shri Acharyaji Himself established the relationship. Still, the doubt arises: Without Guru, how was lila-attainment possible? The Lord granted darshan to Alikhan. Afterwards, the Lord instructed Alikhan and Alikhan’s daughter to become sevak, and He made them sevak. Here He did not do so—this becomes a doubt.

Why? Because regarding Brahmasambandha, this is the very order of Shri Govardhandhar: “Whom you will perform Brahmasambandha for—I shall accept them.” Therefore, without the Brahmasambandha performed through Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu and Shri Gusainji, how was lila-attainment achieved? Uplift can occur, but the attainment of lila is extremely rare.

The giving of Brahmasambandha was expanded only through

Vallabhakul. Why? Because Shri Acharyaji gave the order to the sevaks to recite the Name, but not to grant Brahmasambandha. Therefore, the gift of Brahmasambandha comes only through Vallabhakul. No other source is fruitful. This becomes a doubt.

Here it is said: The courtesan's daughter abandoned her body and went straight into lila. In Lila, Lalita and Shri Swaminiji always reside. Krishnadas in lila is in Lalita's form. Removing her from the world and sending her to lila, Shri Lalitaji through Shri Swaminiji granted her Brahmasambandha and kept her in her own seva. Why? Because she is a sakhi of Lalita. In this way Brahmasambandha occurred.

Just as in Mathura the daughter of the Nagar caste was given Brahmasambandha in the lila by Shri Gusainji—know this meaning. Thus, Krishnadas was such a bhagavadiya that he enabled the acceptance of the courtesan.

Prasang 6 – The Vaishnavs Approach Krishnadas

And once, all the Vaishnavs gathered and came to Kumbhandasji. They lovingly seated him and asked: "Today by great grace we have come—please instruct us somewhat." Then the Vaishnavs said: "We have come to hear something of the path." Then Kumbhandasji said: "In the method of the Path, Krishnadas Adhikari is expert. Ask him." Then the Vaishnavs said: "We do not have the capacity to ask Krishnadas." Then Kumbhandasji said: "Come with me; on your behalf I will ask." Then all the Vaishnavs went with Kumbhandasji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Kumbhandasji did not say this idly. The secret of his mind is always absorbed in lila. Who knows what arises in love? And in kirtan, he describes lila in very profound ways. According to one's own adhikar, that quality appears in the kirtan. And when one must speak to Vaishnavs, he must explain openly. Therefore Kumbhandasji brought all the Vaishnavs to Krishnadas. Then seeing all the Vaishnavs, Krishnadas became very pleased and welcomed them all respectfully. At that time Krishnadas sang this kirtan. The verse:

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

ग रधर जब अ नो क र जाने । ताकौ मन भक्तन की सेवा भक्त चरनरज सदा लुभाने ॥१॥

भक्तन में म त भक्तन में ग त ह रजन ह र एक क र माने। 'कृष्णदास' मन बच क्रम क र ह रजन

संगे ह र उर आने

॥२॥

Raga Sarang -

When one comes to know Giridhar in this very way, his mind is in the service of the

devotees, always being enticed by the dust of the devotees' feet. 1

His understanding is among the devotees, his movement is among the devotees, he

considers the servants of hari and hari to be one. "Krishnadas", with mind, speech and

actions, in the company of hari's devotees, brings hari into his heart. 2

✿✿✿

Krishnadas spoke this verse. After that Krishnadas asked: "Today all the bhagavadiyas have bestowed grace upon me by coming to my place. Therefore, now whatever you command with pleasure, that I will do." Then Kumbhandasji said: "All the Vaishnavs wish to hear the method of the Pushtimarg. What should we say? How should remembrance (sumiran) be performed so that the experience of the Pushtimarg may arise? Please, by your grace, tell us."

Then Krishnadas said: "Kumbhandasji! You are worthy in every way, for you are a bhagavadiya who is the recipient of Shri Acharyaji's grace. That is fitting. You are senior—how can I speak before you? Nothing is hidden from you." Then Kumbhandasji said to Krishnadas: "You must speak—this is our command. Among all sevaks, you are the foremost. The work of the sevaks is in your hands. You are the adhikari of the Pushtimarg; therefore, you speak." Then Krishnadas first spoke the sentiment (bhav) of the Ashtakshar in kirtan. The verse:

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

कृष्ण श्रीकृष्ण: शरणं मम उच्चरे। रेन दन नत्य प्र त सदा पल छन घडी करत वध्वंस जन अ खल अघ प रहरे

॥१॥

होत ह ररूप ब्रजभूप भावे सदा अगम भव संधुको बना साधन तरे । रहत नस दवस आनंद उरमें भरे पिुष्ट लीला

सकल सार उर में घरे ॥२॥

रमा अज सव सेष सनका द सुक सारदा व्यास नारद रटे पल मुख ना टरे। लाल ग रघरनकी म हमा अतुल जगमगे

सरन 'कृष्णदास' नगम ने त ने त करे ॥३॥

Raga Sarang -

The one who recites "Shri Kṛṣṇaḥ Sharaṇam Mama", night and day, eternally, at every

moment, every instant, every second, destroys and removes all sins of people. □1□

He becomes feeling the form of Hari, the lord of Braj, always crosses the unfathomable

ocean of worldly existence without any other means, remains day and night with joy

filled in his heart, keeps in his heart the entire essence of all the pastimes of the path of

grace. □2□

Rama, Aj (Brahma), Shiv, Shesh, Sanak and the others, Shuk, Sarada, Vyas, Narad keep

reciting, their mouths do not turn away for a moment, the glory of the beloved Giridhar

is incomparable, it shines in that refuge, "Krishnadas" says, the Vedas say "there is no

end, there is no end". □3□

✿✿✿

So, having explained the sentiment of the eight-syllable mantra, he now sang in kirtan the sentiment of the five-syllable mantra. The pada:

✿✿✿

राग सारंग -

कृष्ण ये कृष्ण मन मांह ग त जा नए। देह ई द्रय प्रान दारागारा द वत्त आत्मा सकल श्रीकृष्ण की मा नए ॥१॥

कृष्ण मम स्वामी हो दास मन वच क्रम, कता येही सदा िजय आ नए। 'कृष्णदास ननाथ' ह रदासवयधर चरनरज

वल्लभाधीश मन सा नए ॥२॥

Raga Sarang -

Krishna, Krishna, know the state of my mind within. consider body, senses, life-breath,

wife, home and so on, wealth and self, all as belonging to shri krishna. □1□

Krishna is my lord, I am the servant, with mind, speech and actions, always bring only

him into the heart as the doer. "krishnadas ninath", polish the mind with the dust of the

feet of the foremost servants of hari, the lord of vallabha. □2□

✿✿✿

Thus these two kirtans Krishnadas sang and recited. Then all the Vaishnavs, becoming pleased, said: “Krishnadas! You are blessed, for in these two kirtans you have removed all doubts and have explained all the principles of the Path.” After that, taking leave of Krishnadas, all the Vaishnavs went back to their homes. Thus Krishnadas was such a bhagavadiya, so greatly graced by Shri Acharyaji.

Prasang 7 – Krishnadas and Gangabai Kshatrani

And Krishnadas had great affection for Gangabai Kshatrani.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Why so? In the lila, Gangabai belongs to the group of the Shrutis and is of tamasic bhakti. She took birth in the house of a Kshatriya in Mathura. Later, when she was eleven years old, she was married in Mathura to the son of a Kshatriya. Afterwards, the sons who were born to Gangabai Kshatrani in Mathura all died—nine sons were born, and all passed away. Then a daughter was born. Gangabai Kshatrani married this daughter. Her

daughter had a great amount of jewelry. Then the daughter died. The jewelry of the daughter, worth one lakh rupees, she kept hidden away. Giving some share to the Hakim of Mathura, she kept all the jewelry.

Later, when she was fifty-five years old, she came to Shrinathji's door and stayed there because of a dispute. There she met Krishnadas and, together with him, asked Shri Acharyaji to accept her as a sevak. Then Krishnadas made a request to Shri Acharyaji: "Maharaj! Please give refuge to Gangabai Kshatrani." Then Shri Acharyaji said: "The jiva is indeed a Devi, but at present her mind is not in Shri Thakurji." Then Krishnadas requested: "Maharaj! By your grace, Shri Govardhannathji will also bestow grace."

Afterwards, Shri Acharyaji, at the insistence of Krishnadas, had Gangabai perform the name-surrender ceremony. From then on, whenever Krishnadas went abroad from Shri Govardhannathji, taking offerings, Gangabai Kshatrani would come to Mathura. And when Krishnadas returned to Shrinathji's door, Gangabai Kshatrani would also bring all her things from Mathura and come to Shriji's door.

In order to turn Gangabai Kshatrani's mind toward Bhagav-dharma, Krishnadas would send Mahaprasad of Shrinathji to her house twice a day. Why? Because Gangabai had great love for eating and drinking. So Krishnadas would arrange very beautiful items of bhog for Shrinathji and would also explain Bhagav-dharma to Gangabai. Afterwards, Krishnadas would have Gangabai take all the darshans of Shrinathji. From being with Krishnadas, the mind of Gangabai Kshatrani became extraordinary.

One day Shri Gusainji himself was offering Rajbhog to Shri Govardhannathji, and Gangabai's gaze fell upon the bhog items. Shri Govardhannathji then did not partake of the Rajbhog. Afterwards, Shri Gusainji removed the bhog (Bhog Saraya). Then, performing the Rajbhog Aarti and the Anusar, he himself came down from the hill.

The inner sevaks took Mahaprasad. Shri Gusainji also took Mahaprasad and laid down to rest. Then Shri Govardhannathji came and, giving a kick to Ramdas, the chief inner sevak, woke him up. Ramdasji awoke. Seeing that, he realized that it was Shri Govardhannathji. Ramdasji offered prostration and stood with folded hands. Then Shri Govardhannathji said to Ramdas: "I am hungry." Ramdasji then requested Shri Govardhannathji: "Maharaj! At the time of Rajbhog, Shri Gusainji was there. Why then are you hungry?" Shri Govardhannathji said: "At the time of Rajbhog, Gangabai's gaze fell upon the bhog items. Therefore, I did not partake of Rajbhog."

Then Ramdasji, the inner sevak, went to Shri Gusainji, pressed his lotus feet and woke him, and said with folded hands: “Maharaj! Shri Govardhannathji is hungry. In Rajbhog, Gangabai Kshatrani’s gaze fell on the bhog. Therefore, Shri Govardhannathji did not partake of Rajbhog.” Hearing this, Shri Gusainji immediately rose, bathed, and went to the temple of Shri Govardhannathji. Afterwards, Ramdasji also bathed and came. In that time all the other inner sevaks had also bathed.

Then Shri Gusainji himself, seeing that it was winter season, said to the inner sevaks: “Prepare badi and rice (badi-bhat). It will be ready quickly, so make it at once.” Then the inner sevaks prepared badi and rice. Shri Gusainji himself offered this bhog to Shri Govardhannathji. After that, all the items for Rajbhog were made ready, and all the items for Senbhog were also prepared. Shri Gusainji offered both Rajbhog and Senbhog together.

Then when the time came to remove the bhog, he did so. Afterwards, laying Shri Govardhannathji to rest and doing the Anusar, he came outside. Holding in his own holy hand a small pot filled with badi-bhat, Shri Gusainji came down from the hill. Then, to all the sevaks, he gave the badi-bhat from his own hand in small portions, and he himself ate it with relish. The badi-bhat Mahaprasad was very tasty, and Shri Gusainji greatly praised it from his holy mouth.

Then Ramdas and all the sevaks said to Shri Gusainji: “Maharaj! We have made this item many times in winter, but today it is especially delicious.” Then Shri Gusainji said: “Shri Govardhannathji Himself was hungry, so He ate with loving pleasure. Therefore, the taste has become astonishing.” At that time, Krishnadas was standing nearby. Krishnadas said: “Maharaj! You Yourself are the one who performs, and You Yourself are the one who eats—so why would it not be tasty?” Then Shri Gusainji said from his own holy mouth at that moment: “It is your bhog alone that they are eating.”

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Here a doubt arises: If Shri Govardhannathji did not partake, then how is it that Shri Gusainji removed the bhog, performed the sipping, and wiped the mouth-cloth? Afterwards he gave betel (bidi) to Shri Govardhandhar. Would Shri Gusainji not know that the Lord was hungry? And when Shri Govardhandhar was taking the betel, could He not say to Shri Gusainji: “I did not partake of Rajbhog”? Why then did He say this only to Ramdas, the inner sevak?

This doubt arises. The explanation is: On that very day, at Shri Gokul,

at the house of Shri Navanitpriyaji, Shri Giridharji had arranged for badi-bhat, prepared by Shri Sobha Betiji. Then in the minds of Shri Giridharji and Shri Sobha Betiji arose the desire: “If only Shri Govardhan-dhar Himself would come here and eat this new preparation.” Thus, from there, that other form of His (the one who uplifts devotees) came from Shri Giriraj, and Shri Govardhandhar partook of the badi-bhat. And the heartfelt wish of Shri Giridharji and Shri Sobha Betiji, He made the devotees experience. After partaking there in that form, He returned to the top of Giriraj hill.

When He came there (to Giriraj), all the sevaks had already taken Mahaprasad, and Shri Gusainji himself had lain down to rest. At that time, in the temple, Shri Swaminiji asked: “Tell me—where have You come from?” Then Shri Govardhannathji said: “I have come after eating badi-bhat at Shri Gokul, where it was the wish of Shri Giridharji and Shri Sobha Betiji.” Hearing this, Shri Swaminiji also desired to eat badi-bhat, thinking: “If we eat badi-bhat, that will be good. But here the Rajbhog has already taken place.”

Then Shri Swaminiji said to Shri Nathji: “Go and tell Ramdas that Gangabai Kshatrani’s gaze has fallen upon the bhog items.” Why? Because even the words of the lila-creation must be fulfilled. There was also the six-month separation of Shri Gusainji, for in the lila, once Shri Thakurji said to Lalitaji: “I will come to your Nikunj.” This was overheard by Shri Chandravliji. Shri Chandravliji, by various clever forms of seva, prevented Shri Thakurji from going to Lalitaji’s place for six months. Lalitaji, suffering the pangs of separation, became greatly weakened.

Later, when Shri Swaminiji came to know of this, she took Lalitaji with her and at that very moment came to Shri Thakurji. And she said to Shri Thakurji: “You have given my sakhi a separation of six months, now for six months you will remain subject to Lalita-sakhi. And since you have caused suffering to my sakhi, you must now experience six months of suffering, and even have your darshan withheld from her.” Hearing this, Shri Thakurji remained silent.

One sakhi told this matter to Shri Chandravliji. Hearing it, Shri Chandravliji said: “Shri Swaminiji and Shri Thakurji are great. It is not possible to say anything to them. But Lalita-sakhi, being a sakhi, has done wrong in this way. The sakhi of Shri Swaminiji and my own sakhi are equal. Yet she has caused me to be cursed so that for six months I will not have darshan of the Lord? Lalita has acted in opposition to Swamini.”

Why so? From Shri Thakurji, Shri Swaminiji is manifested; from the moon-like face of Swaminiji, Shri Chandravliji is manifested; from Shri Chandravliji, all the sakhis of Swaminiji are manifested. Therefore, on Shri Thakurji's right side, Shri Chandravliji sits. So among all the sakhis who are in the form of Swamini, Shri Chandravliji is supreme. Therefore, Shri Chandravliji said: "Lalita has acted in opposition to Swamini. Therefore, let Lalita have an early death and obtain a ghost-body. Let neither Shri Thakurji nor Shri Swaminiji be able to protect her. And as for the ghost-condition—it cannot be removed. She who brought this curse upon me must bear this fruit."

One sakhi told this matter to Lalita. Hearing it, Lalita trembled greatly and at once ran and fell at the feet of Shri Swaminiji. Afterwards, Lalita told everything. Then Shri Swaminiji called Shri Thakurji and said: "Lalitaji has committed this offense with her own hands. Now do something to remedy it."

Then Shri Thakurji, taking Shri Swaminiji with him and accompanied by the assembly of Lalita and others, went to Shri Chandravliji's place. Shri Chandravliji immediately rose and seated Shri Thakurji and Shri Swaminiji on a high seat. Then, with supreme love, she worshiped both forms and offered them beautiful bhog. Afterwards, she offered them betel and stood with folded hands.

Then both forms, becoming pleased, took Shri Chandravliji by the hand and seated her near them. Then Shri Swaminiji said: "Listen, Shri Chandravliji! Your love is supremely extraordinary. There is no difference at all between us and you. And this Lalita is our own sakhi, therefore she is yours as well. Now she has received a curse. Free her from it."

Then Shri Chandravliji said: "Lalita is mine. What has happened is only for the sake of performing lila in this world. Lalita will become a ghost, and it is I who will uplift her. This is my firm and certain word." Then Lalita fell at the feet of Shri Chandravliji and said: "I have committed an offense against you, and I am bearing its result." Then Shri Swaminiji said: "This entire circle will perform lila on Shri Giriraj in Kaliyug and all will appear there." Hearing these words of Shri Swaminiji, Shri Thakurji, Shri Chandravliji, Lalita, and all became pleased.

Thus, in the lila-creation, love is extraordinary, curses are extraordinary, and even jealousy is extraordinary. None of it arises from Maya. It is all enacted there alone. When revealed on earth, jealousy and curses are only in slight measure, in order that the jivas

of the earth may sing of the lila and attain the Lord. Whoever considers that jealousy and cursing to be worldly becomes wrong and an offender. All the activities in the lila-creation are extraordinary. Know this.

In this way, by the wish of Shri Thakurji and Shri Swaminiji, Shri Govardhan appeared on Giriraj, and in the form of Shri Swaminiji, Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu revealed Shri Govardhannathji. In the lila, Shri Gusainji was manifested from Shri Chandravliji, and from Lalita came Krishnadas Adhikari.

And Shri Govardhandhar has many forms, but two forms remain always. One form is the one which Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu installed there and who is seated there. And the other form (the one who uplifts devotees) gives joy to all devotees. He plays with Kumbhandas, with Govindswami, and with whichever bhagavadiyas are here and there. He grants them experience.

Therefore, when Shri Gusainji himself was offering the bhog, and Gangabai Kshatrani's gaze fell upon it, at that time Shri Gusainji did offer Rajbhog and the Lord did partake—otherwise, if Shri Govardhandhar had not eaten, then all the sevaks would have become fallen by eating unoffered food. Therefore, the form which Shri Acharyaji had installed in the temple partook of it. At the same time, Shri Swaminiji said to Shri Govardhannathji: "Let there be six months of separation from Shri Gusainji. Therefore, take Gangabai's name." Since Krishnadas and Gangabai have love for each other, Shri Gusainji will speak to Gangabai. And he will also speak sharply to Krishnadas. That sharpness will pain Krishnadas's mind, which will in turn bring about separation from Shri Gusainji. Thus, you (Shri Nathji) should go and say: 'I am hungry.' So Shri Nathji went and said this to Ramdas. But Ramdas did not understand this inner secret. Ramdas went and told Shri Gusainji, and then Shri Gusainji understood in his heart: "Gangabai's gaze has fallen upon the bhog items."

He also understood: "We and Krishnadas had a conversation in lila, and Shri Nathji now wishes to see it fulfilled. This has surely become determined." Knowing this, he thought: "Now whatever seva is possible, must be done with love. For seva is now rare." Considering this, he immediately bathed and had badi-bhat prepared and offered here. It had not been prepared here before; it had been eaten at Shri Gokul. Therefore, he thought: "Let us feed the Giriraj Thakur as well." Quickly he had it prepared and placed in bhog. Then he offered Senbhog and Rajbhog together. Afterwards he performed the Sen Aarti, did the Anusar, and thought in his mind: "Now the darshan of

Shri Govardhannathji and Mahaprasad are becoming rare." So he lifted the pot of badi-bhat, poured it into an earthen vessel, came down from the hill, and gave it in small handfuls to everyone, and also ate it himself with great praise.

Then Krishnadas, by the Lord's will, spoke in jest: "You yourself are the doer, and you yourself are the eater—so why would it not be delicious?" In this, he indicated: "You did not ask us. You yourself went and prepared the item, and you yourself went and offered it. Such good fortune is only yours." These were the words Krishnadas spoke.

Then Shri Gusainji said: "It is indeed your own bhogs that are being eaten." By saying this, he indicated two things: First, that you showed affection to Gangabai Kshatrani and kept her seated there, so her gaze fell upon the Rajbhog items. That is your doing. Otherwise, how would Gangabai have come there? Second, that earlier you, in the lila, brought about the curse from Shri Swaminiji—this too is your doing. Therefore, we are eating your bhogs. By this he also indicated: "I have understood that now your fortune has opened. What you will do, you will also experience the fruit of."

Hearing this, Krishnadas felt very hurt in his heart. Then Krishnadas thought: "I will stop taking darshan of Shri Gusainji. How should I bring this about?" Then there was Shri Gopinathji, elder brother of Shri Gusainji, whose son was Shri Purushottamji. Krishnadas met him and said: "You are the son of Shri Gopinathji, the eldest son of Shri Acharyaji. Why do you sit quietly? You should perform all the seva and shringar of Shri Govardhannathji. Shri Gusainji has taken all authority upon himself. Yet you are the rightful heir." Then Shri Purushottamji said: "We do not have the ability to create conflict with Shri Gusainji." Then Krishnadas said: "Come after bathing with me. Let us go up to the temple on the hill and you perform the seva and shringar of Shri Nathji. We will arrange everything."

Afterwards, two ghadi (about an hour) before Utthapan, Shri Purushottamji bathed and, going with Krishnadas, went up the hill and sat in the temple. Krishnadas went and sat on the Dandoti-sila. In the meantime, Shri Gusainji bathed and came near the Dandoti-sila. Then Krishnadas said to Shri Gusainji: "Shri Purushottamji has bathed and gone into the temple. He is the rightful heir. When he calls you, then you may come up the hill. Do not go up the hill now. If you do not go to Shri Govardhandhar for darshan, then…" So Shri Gusainji offered obeisance to the flag of Shri Nathji, remembered the lila-incident, and went to Parasoli and stayed there. There he began to

experience separation.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): He did not even go to Shri Gokul, to Shri Navanitpriyaji, for the words of Shri Swaminiji were: “Both I and Shri Thakurji will experience separation.” Therefore, if he went to Shri Gokul, who knows what would happen? So for six months, union with Shri Thakurji was rare. Therefore, he stayed at Parasoli.

And in the temple of Shri Govardhannathji, on the Parasoli side, there was a small gate (bari). Shri Govardhannathji would come there and give darshan to Shri Gusainji. Shri Gusainji would sit in Parasoli and look every day at that gate. When Krishnadas came down from the temple, then Shri Govardhannathji would come and sit at the gate. One day, when Krishnadas came to Anyor, he saw Shri Govardhannathji sitting at the gate. Then Krishnadas came in the morning to the temple and had the gate bricked up and said to Shri Govardhannathji: “I have resolved to stop taking darshan of Shri Gusainji. Why then do you sit at the gate? Now do not go toward him.” Thus Krishnadas did not allow Shri Nathji to go to play at Parasoli with Shri Gusainji.

So Shri Govardhandhar sat and made petitions (vijnapti) to Shri Gusainji. When Ramdas, the chief inner sevak, went to Shri Gusainji after Rajbhog Aarti, he would give him the charanodak of Shri Nathji. Then Shri Gusainji would make a flower-garland and keep it aside. Into the inside of that garland, he would place a folded note of his petition. Ramdas would take it and go. When he put the garland on Shri Govardhannathji, then from the garland Shri Nathji would take out the paper of the petition and read it. Afterwards, he would write the reply, using the red color of his paan-spit as ink, on the leaf of a betel. He would give this to Ramdas. When Ramdas went after Rajbhog the next day, he would give the letter written by Shri Nathji to Shri Gusainji. Shri Gusainji would read it and then dissolve it in water and drink it. Therefore, the verses (shlokas) written by Shri Nathji did not become known in the world.

The petitions that Shri Gusainji wrote, Shri Nathji Himself read and then gave to Ramdas. Thus, only the petitions became known. One day, when Shri Gusainji felt very great separation, he wrote this. The shlok:

त्वदशन वहीनस्य त्वदीयस्य तु जी वतम ् । व्यथमेव यथा नाथ ! दुभगाया नवं वयः ॥

For one who is deprived of seeing you, yet belongs to you, his life is indeed useless, o

Lord, just as the fresh youth of an unfortunate woman is useless.

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Having written this shlok, he sent it, whose meaning was: “Those who are your devotees and yet live without you, they live in vain. Such living is unfortunate.” Shri Govardhannathji read this and wrote in reply: “The sign of a cloud is this: when the time for rain comes, then it comes and rains. The whole world knows this. In the same way, when the proper time for Krishnadas comes, then the meeting will take place. You know this, and I too know this. Therefore, hold patience and let the time come. Why do you feel such intense separation?” Ramdasji brought this letter. Shri Gusainji read it and then wrote this:

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'अंबुदरय स्वभावोऽयं समये वा र मुञ्च त । तथा प चातकः खनो रटत्येव न संशयः ॥'

This is the nature of the rain-cloud, it releases water in due time, yet the chataka bird,

though distressed, keeps calling out indeed, there is no doubt.

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Thus he wrote: “The cloud has this nature: when the time comes, then it rains (the meeting takes place). But the chatak bird has love for the cloud. So such devotees— they constantly call out to the cloud-form Shri Krishna, and therefore they have no peace. If you desire, then the time will come. Without You, we have no patience. The duty of devotees is this: they should forever long for You just as the chatak longs for the cloud.” He wrote this and sent it.

In this way Ramdasji came daily, and all the sevaks came to Shri Gusainji, and Krishnadas knew this. But nothing could be done with the sevaks. He even forbade Ramdasji, saying: “You take letters to Shri Gusainji and bring letters back. This is not proper.” Then Ramdasji said: “I will go daily for the darshan of Shri Gusainji—whether you keep me in service or do not keep me.” Then Krishnadas remained silent. Why? Because where could such a sevak be found again? For this reason Krishnadas did not speak anything.

Thus, from Paush Sudi 6 up to Ashadh Sudi 5, Shri Gusainji remained in separation. When Ashadh Sudi 5 arrived, Raja Birbal came to Shri Gokul. Shri Gusainji was at Parasoli, and Shri Giridharji was at home. Birbal came before Shri Giridharji, bowed, and asked: “Where is Shri Gusainji? Many days have passed; I have not had his darshan.” Then Shri Giridharji said to Birbal: “Shri Gusainji is staying in Parasoli. Krishnadas Adhikari has stopped Shri Gusainji’s darshan. For six months Shri Gusainji has been very distressed.” Then Birbal said: “I will at once go and have Krishnadas removed.”

Saying this, Birbal came to Shri Mathura. The police authority of Mathura was under Birbal. So from Mathura, Birbal sent five hundred men and told them: “Go to Shri Govardhan and seize Krishnadas and bring him.” The men went, and in the evening they arrived at Shri Govardhan. They seized Krishnadas and brought him to Mathura. Then Birbal sent men at midnight to Shri Gokul, saying: “Krishnadas has been seized and put in the prison. You bring Shri Gusainji to Shri Govardhannathji’s temple.”

They carried this message to Shri Giridharji. That very night Shri Giridharji mounted a horse and went to Parasoli. At dawn it was Ashadh Sudi 6. Shri Giridharji reached there, bowed to Shri Gusainji, and said: “You must go to Shri Govardhannathji’s temple and perform the seva-singaar.” Then Shri Gusainji said to Shri Giridharji: “If Krishnadas permits, then I will come.” Then Shri Giridharji said: “Krishnadas has been put into the prison at Mathura.” Hearing this, Shri Gusainji said: “Alas, alas! A sevak who is the grace-recipient of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu—bhagavadiya Krishnadas—has suffered such sorrow and such hardship!” Then Shri Gusainji said to Shri Giridharji: “You must have spoken to Birbal.” Shri Giridharji replied: “I only casually told Birbal that Krishnadas has stopped Shri Gusainji’s darshan. I said nothing more.”

Then Shri Gusainji said: “I will take food only when Krishnadas arrives.” Hearing this, Shri Giridharji immediately mounted his horse and went to Shri Mathura. He said to Birbal: “My uncle (Shri Gusainji) will take food only when Krishnadas comes there. Therefore release Krishnadas.” Birbal summoned Krishnadas from the prison and said: “See, due to the grace of Shri Gusainji, he will not take food without you. And such things you have done to him! Now I release you, but if hereafter you ever offend Shri Gusainji, then I will never release you again.” Birbal said this and handed Krishnadas over to Shri Giridharji. Shri Giridharji brought Krishnadas to Parasoli. Shri Gusainji, seeing Krishnadas, knowing him to be the Adhikari of Shri Govardhannathji, rose and stood in respect. Krishnadas, humbled, bowed down to Shri

Gusainji, touched his feet, and sang this verse.

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राग सारंग -

ताही को सरनॉइए जो श्रीवल्लभसुत पदरज र त होइ ।कीजे कहा आन ऊँचे पद तनसों कहा सगाइ मोइ ॥१॥

जाके मनमें उग्र भरम है श्री वडल श्री ग रधरदोइ। ताकौ संग वषम वष हूते भूले चतुर करो िज न कोइ ॥२॥

सारासार वचार मतो क र श्रु त वच गोधन लयो नचोइ । तहां नवनीत प्रगट पुरुषोत्तम सहजई गोरस लयो है

बलोइ ॥ ३॥

उग्र प्रताप दे ख अपने चक्षु अस्मसार ज्यों भदे न तोय। 'कृष्णदास' सुर तें असुर भए असुर ते सुर भए चरनन छोय

॥४॥

Raag sarang -

Only to that one should the head be bowed, in whom there is love for the dust of the feet

of shri vallabha's son. why make, for me, any other relation with those who have high

positions elsewhere. □1□

In whose mind there is intense faith in the two, Shri Vitthal and Shri Giridhar. In whose

company even terrible poison becomes harmless, let no clever person ever forget him.

□2□

Without making too much discrimination of essence and non essence, having squeezed

out the cow wealth that is the words of the shruti. There, as the butter that has appeared,

purushottam is manifest, having easily churned the cow's milk. □3□

On seeing with one's own eyes his fierce majesty, even the very essence of stone is split.

"krishnadas", from sur they became asur, from asur they became sur, on touching his

feet. □4□

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Hearing this verse, Shri Gusainji became very pleased. Then Krishnadas made a humble request: "Maharaj! Please forgive my offense, and now please come to the seva of Shri Govardhannathji." Then Shri Gusainji said: "Since your permission has now been given, I will go." Then taking Krishnadas with him, Shri Gusainji went to the temple of Shri Govardhannathji. He offered prostrations to Shri Govardhandhar.

After that, it was the time of the adornment (singaar), and since it was the day of Ashadh Sudi 6, the saffron-colored kusumal robe and pichhoda were placed on Him. After that, they arrived for Rajbhog. Then, after completing the seva from Utthapan up to Sen, and

performing the Sen Aarti, Shri Gusainji, standing before Shri Nathji, placed a dussala (shawl of honor) upon Krishnadas and said: “Do the service and authority of Shri Govardhandhar. You are blessed.” At that time Krishnadas sang this verse.

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राग कान्ह -

परम कृपाल श्रीवल्लभनंदन करत कृपा नज हाथ दे माथै। जे जन सर न आए अनुसर ही ग ह सोपत श्रौगोवद्धनना

थै ॥१॥

परम उदार चतुर चंताम न राखत भवधारा तें साथै। भिज ´कृष्णदास' काज सब सरही जो जानें श्री वदलनाथै ॥२॥

Raag Kanh - The supremely merciful son of shri Vallabh, showing grace, places his own hand on the

head. those people who have come into his refuge, having firmly taken hold, sleep (rest

securely) with Shri GovardhanNath. □1□

Supremely generous, clever, a wish fulfilling jewel, he keeps (his servant) away from the stream of worldly existence. worship, says "krishnadas", all tasks are fulfilled for the one

who knows Shri Vitthalnath. □2□

✿✿✿

Hearing this verse, Shri Gusainji became very pleased. Then Krishnadas humbly requested: “Maharaj! Please forgive my offense.” Then Shri Gusainji said from his sacred mouth: “Your offense will be forgiven by Shri Nathji.” After that, Shri Gusainji performed anosar and gave assurance to everyone. All the Vaishnavs and sevaks were pleased. Then, just as he daily performed the seva and adornment of Shri Govardhandhar, he again began to do so. And Krishnadas, by Shri Gusainji’s order, again began performing the service of authority. Thus Krishnadas was such a grace-recipient bhagavadiya.

Prasang 8 - Shri Gusainji’s Compassionate Rescue of

Krishnadas in Vrindavan

And once, Shri Gusainji was in Shri Gokul, and Krishnadas came to Shri Gokul from Shri Govardhan. Then Shri Gusainji rose and, recognizing Krishnadas as the Adhikari of Shri Govardhannathji, very joyfully welcomed him and seated him beside himself. Afterwards he asked the well-being of Shri Govardhandhar, and with his own divine hands gave Krishnadas the Mahaprasad of Shri Navanitpriyaji. Then he had the Mahaprasad of the Sen Bhog brought and arranged a beautiful bed for night rest.

When morning came, Krishnadas prepared to depart. At that time Krishnadas requested Shri Gusainji: “Maharaj! My heart greatly desires to see Vrindavan.” Then Shri Gusainji said: “Very well, go — but you will suffer.” Then Krishnadas crossed the river Yamuna. Although Shri Gusainji had advised otherwise, his mind did not accept it, and he proceeded toward Shri Vrindavan. By midday he reached Vrindavan. The saints and mahants of Vrindavan came to meet Krishnadas.

At that time fever rose in Krishnadas. He became thirsty, and his throat began to dry. Krishnadas said: “I am extremely thirsty; my throat is drying.” The saints and mahants said: “Quickly bring water.” Krishnadas had arrived alone on a chariot. Then Krishnadas said: “If a Vallabhiya Vaishnav of Shri Gokul can be found here, tell him to bring the water — then I will drink.” Then the saints and mahants argued with Krishnadas and said: “There is no Vaishnav here. Only a sweeper from Shri Gokul was married here and has come. If you tell him, he can be called.”

Then Krishnadas said: “He — the sweeper of Gokul — is the most excellent of all. Tell him to take a clay vessel from the potter’s house, bathe in Shri Yamunaji, and bring water.” So they went to that sweeper and said: “Krishnadas has a fever and is thirsty. He has asked for water from you. So please take it.” Then that sweeper ran from there. At that very moment, Shri Gusainji, after performing the Rajbhog Aarti of Shri Navanitpriyaji, was coming to Shri Nathji-dwar and had reached the ghāṭ. Then the sweeper, covering his face with cloth, said softly: “Maharaj! Krishnadas is in Shri Vrindavan. He has a fever there and is thirsty. He has asked for water from me. So I have come from Vrindavan here.”

Hearing this, Shri Gusainji took a water jug from his attendant, mounted a horse, and quickly went to Vrindavan. He then had Krishnadas lifted from the chariot and gave him water to drink.

Immediately Krishnadas became alert, and the fever subsided. Then Krishnadas bowed to Shri Gusainji and sang this verse.

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राग कान्हरो -

श्री वद्दलजु के चरन न की ब ल । हमसे प तत उद्धारन परम कृपाल आपु आए च ल ॥ १॥

उज्वल अरुन दया रंग रंिजत नखचंद्र वरहतम नद ल। सेवत सुखकर सोभा पावत भक्त मु दत ल लत पद अंगु ल

॥२॥

अ तसै मृदुल सुगंध सु सीतल परसत त्र वध ताप डारत म ल । कहे 'कृष्णदास' बार एक सु ध क र तेरो कहा करेगो

रपु क ल ॥३॥

Raag Kanharo -

I am a sacrifice to the feet of Shree Vitthalnathji, the supremely merciful one, who

himself came, walking, to uplift one as fallen as me. □1□

Bright, reddish, dyed in the color of compassion, his moon-like toenails crush the

darkness of separation, as one serves them, they give joy and beauty, the devotees,

delighted, behold the graceful toes. □2□

Extremely soft, fragrant and very cool, at their touch the three kinds of sufferings are

rubbed away and fall off, says "krishnadas", having remembered you even once, what

will the enemy kali be able to do to you. □3□

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Thus, after singing this verse, Krishnadas made a request to Shri Gusainji, saying: “Maharaj! I did not obey what you had told me, and therefore I suffered so much.” After that, Krishnadas came to Shri

Govardhan along with Shri Gusainji. Then the time for the Sen Aarti arrived. Shri Gusainji bathed and performed the Sen Aarti. Then Krishnadas sang this verse.

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राग कान्हरो -

आजु कौ दन ध न ध नरी माई नैनन देखे नंद नंदन। परम उदार मनोहर मूर त ताप हरत ल ख पूजत चंदन ॥१॥

नवलराय श्रीगोवद्धनधारी रूप रा स युवती मन फंदन। ध्वजा वजाकुंस जय बराजत ´कृष्णदास´ कीनो पद वंदन

॥२॥

Raag Kanharo -

Today's day is blessed, blessed, o mother, the eyes have seen Nand-nandan. supremely

generous, delightful form, removing all torment, seeing him one worships with sandal

paste. □1□

Navalray Shri Govardhan-dhari, a mass of beauty, the snare of young maidens' minds.

With flag, thunderbolt and the victory over Kamsa shining forth, "Krishnadas" has

offered obeisance at his feet. □2□

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After that, Shri Gusainji performed the Anosar and came down from the hill. In this way, Krishnadas held the authority (adhikār) of Shri Govardhannathji for many days.

Prasang 9 – Krishnadas's Disappearance in the Well and the

Hidden Preta Lila

Then one day, a Vaishnav came and said to Krishnadas: "I have to have a well constructed here, and I must go to my own country. So I will return to my country. Therefore, you keep this money." Saying this, Vaishnav gave three hundred rupees and went to his country. Then Krishnadas took one hundred rupees from Vaishnav's money, put it into a small pot (kulharaa), and buried it in the garden under a mango tree. After that, seeing an auspicious moment, he began the construction of the well in the garden near Puchhari.

After several days, the well was completed, and two hundred rupees were spent. Then the finishing structure (mohado) of the well still remained to be done. So Krishnadas thought in his mind: "With one hundred rupees, the mohado will be made properly." After that, Krishnadas, having taken the darshan of Shri Govardhandhar at Utthapan, went to see that well. He began looking at the well. In Krishnadas's hand there was a staff (aasa). Supporting himself on the staff, Krishnadas stood on the well. At that moment, the staff slipped, and Krishnadas, along with the staff, fell into the well.

Then all the men standing nearby raised an outcry. When Krishnadas fell into the well, several men ran, bringing ropes and a basket. Two men descended inside the well. They searched greatly, but did not find even the body of Krishnadas. So those men returned. At that time, Shri Gusainji had offered the Sen Bhog to Shri Govardhandhar and was seated outside. Ramdas Bhitariyā was sitting near Shri Gusainji. At that moment, the men came and said: "Maharaj! Krishnadas was looking at the well, the staff slipped, and he fell into the well. The men went down into the well to search, but did not find even his body."

At that time, Ramdasji stood there and said: "Tāmasānām adho gatih — (The destination of those in tamas is downward.)" Hearing this, Shri Gusainji said: "Ramdasji, do not say this. Krishnadas was a most-graced Vaishnav, beloved of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. This is a divine lila. If he fell into the well, what happened? Who knows where he is?"

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): The reason is that Shri Gusainji knew

that the curse of the preta-yoni (spirit-body) had come upon him, and therefore he did not reveal it outwardly. Thus Krishnadas, along with this body itself, became a preta. He went and sat on top of a pipal tree near Puchhari.

Prasang 10 – The Weight of Shri Govardhannathji's

Authority and the Final Liberation of Krishnadas

And Shri Gusainji said with his own mouth: "Krishnadas did the authority-service of Shri Govardhandhar very well. Where will such servants now be found? And without an officer (adhikārī), the work cannot proceed. This must be considered." Then Ramdasji requested: "Maharaj! Whomsoever you give the order, he will do it. The seva of Shri Govardhannathji comes only through fortune."

Then Shri Gusainji said: "How shall we tell any soul to take this, and how shall we ruin any soul? To improve someone is very difficult. To spoil someone happens instantly."

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): Thus Shri Acharyaji has said in Shri Subodhiniji — Bhagavat Narayan said to Brahma that Brahma is the agent for creation, but the fruit of the Bhagavata did not appear. Then Brahma told Narada; Narada roamed all worlds, yet the fruit did not appear. Narada told Vedavyasa; Vyasa is the agent of composing scriptures, yet even he did not attain the fruit. Vyasa told Shukadeva; Shukadeva has performed complete renunciation, and remained in renunciation. Then Parikshit performed complete renunciation. Then Parikshit became qualified for the Bhagavata. Then Shukadeva recited day and night, and on the seventh day Parikshit attained Bhagavat-realization.

In the same way, this Pushtimarg is like the Bhagavata. He who is detached becomes fit for it. He who takes the position and becomes proud attains nothing. Therefore, whom shall we give the authority of Shri Govardhandhar? Whom shall we ruin? Ramdasji, hearing this, remained silent.

At that moment, the time for Sen Bhog came. Shri Gusainji offered Sen Bhog. After performing Sen Aarti, Shri Gusainji asked Shri Govardhandhar: "Maharaj! The body of Krishnadas has departed, and without an officer it cannot continue. To whom shall I give the authority and thus ruin him? Therefore, you tell me to whom I should give authority."

Then Shri Govardhannathji said: "I too will not ruin any soul. Whoever takes the authority will be ruined. Therefore, do one thing:

Hold the authority's shawl (dussalo) before everyone and say: 'Whoever wishes to take the authority of Shri Nathji's house should wear this shawl.' Then the one who comes forward to take it, give it to him. Who is destined to fall will come himself." Then Shri Gusainji, pleased, performed the Sen for Shri Govardhannathji.

The next day, at the time of Rajbhog Aarti, all Brajwasis and Vaishnavs assembled. Shri Gusainji held the dussalo in his hand and announced: "Whoever wishes to take the authority of Shri Nathji's house, let him wear this dussalo." Hearing this, several said, "We will do it." First, a Kshatriya spoke. He was made to wear the dussalo. After that, Shri Govardhannathji's Aarti was done, Anosar completed, and Shri Gusainji went to Shri Gokul. After some days passed, one day Shri Govardhannathji's buffalo got lost and wandered into the forest. To search for the buffalo, Gopinathdas the cowherd and five to seven cowherds went toward Puchhari. All of them were greatly graced devotees.

Then they saw Shri Govardhannathji playing with the sakhās near a pipal tree at Puchhari. And atop that pipal tree, Krishnadas, having become a spirit (preta), was seated. Then Krishnadas called out to Gopinathdas the cowherd saying, "Jai Shri Krishna!" And said: "Oh brother! Gopinathdas! You please present my request before Shri Gusainji and say: 'Because of your offense, I have come to this condition. And Shri Govardhandhar is giving darshan—by your grace He gives darshan.'"

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): When Shri Gusainji again placed the authority's dussalo on Krishnadas, Krishnadas sang the verse: "Param kripaal Shrivallabhanandan, karat kripā nij hāth de māṭhe." After singing this, Krishnadas said to Shri Gusainji: "Maharaj! For six months I caused separation to you—please forgive my offense." But Shri Gusainji said: "Your offense will be forgiven by Shri Nathji."

Since Shri Gusainji did not himself forgive him, the preta-yoni did not leave him. Thus although Shri Govardhandhar gave darshan and spoke, the release did not happen. Krishnadas said to Shri Govardhandhar: "Maharaj! You give me darshan—why don't you free me from the preta-yoni?" Shri Govardhannathji replied: "This is not in My hands. Your deliverance rests in the hands of your Shri Gusainji. In the lila, there is the curse upon Chandravali that the preta-yoni must happen. Who can free it? And though you (Krishnadas) are Lalita in the lila, yet considering the earlier words spoken, the release is not granted."

Then Krishnadas said to Gopinathdas: “You please place my request before Shri Gusainji: ‘Without Shri Gusainji’s grace I have no refuge.’ And under the mango tree in Bilchu’s garden there is a hundred rupees buried in a pot. Take it out and have the mohado of the well completed. Tell this to Shri Gusainji. And Shri Nathji’s buffalo you came searching for—she is grazing in the thicket.” Then Gopinathdas fetched the buffalo from the thicket and brought her to Gopalpur. He tied her and performed milking.

After that, Shri Gusainji, finishing the Sen Aarti of Shri Nathji and performing Anosar, descended from the hill and sat in his seat. Then Gopinathdas came to Shri Gusainji and said: “Maharaj! Today Shri Nathji’s buffalo was lost. While searching near Puchhari, Krishnadas, having become a preta, was seen. He is seated atop a pipal tree. Krishnadas remembered God and called me. He made this request: ‘I am a spirit; I committed offense to you, so I have received this preta-yoni. My deliverance lies in your hands.’ And under the mango tree in the garden, a pot of one hundred rupees is buried. He said to take it out and have the mohado of the well made. And the buffalo was told to us by Krishnadas, so we brought her.”

Hearing this, Shri Gusainji thought in his heart: “Krishnadas is in great suffering. Now his release from this preta-yoni must be done.” Immediately Shri Gusainji rose and went to the garden. He had the hundred rupees dug up and gave them to the new officer, saying: “Make the mohado of the well with this hundred rupees of Krishnadas.” That very night, Shri Gusainji mounted a horse and went to Mathura. The next morning, Shri Gusainji performed the funeral rites for Krishnadas with his own hands, did the shrāddha at Dhruv Ghat, and removed the preta-yoni, giving him a divine body and granting him attainment in the lila.

Thus, before Bilchu, at the doorway of Giriraj, in the garden, Krishnadas is the doorway-guardian (mukhiyā). There he resides. In this manner, Krishnadas received lila-attainment through Shri Gusainji.

Bhav Prakash (Revealing the Sentiment): One may doubt: “Did his deliverance not happen through Shri Gusainji’s grace? Then why perform shrāddha at Dhruv Ghat?” The reason: When Gopinathdas saw Krishnadas as a preta, and told all the servants and Brajwasis that Krishnadas had become a spirit, they would in the future come to Shri Gusainji whenever any spirit-related matter arose and say, “Please free him.” If Shri Gusainji freed some and not others, blame would arise. Therefore, Shri Gusainji went to Mathura and performed shrāddha at

Dhruv Ghat. Through that external means the release was done, and all came to believe that the shrāddha of Dhruv Ghat has such power. The inner greatness and grace of Shri Gusainji remained hidden.

As said in the Bhagavata: when Prahlad prayed for his father's liberation, Shri Nṛsiṁhaji said: "In whichever family a devotee is born, twenty-one generations of that devotee are liberated." Prahlad was a devotee of maryādā, whereas Krishnadas was a Pushtimargi divine-favored devotee. Thus, countless ancestors of Krishnadas are liberated. But entry into lila cannot occur without the sambandha of Shri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu. Therefore, for Krishnadas, through an outer form the liberation was manifested, because the entire circle — Krishnadas, Shri Gusainji, Shri Govardhandhar — is divine. There is no jealousy here. And on earth, these divine lilas are spoken and heard. Thus the varta of Krishnadas is supremely divine.

Therefore Shri Gusainji said: "Krishnadas sang such wondrous rāsa-descriptions that no one else could. And being a servant of Shri Acharyaji, he performed service in such a manner that no other could do. And he held the authority of Shri Nathji in such a way that no other could."

Thus Shri Gusainji, by his own mouth, praised Krishnadas. Krishnadas, the adhikārī, was such a graced, divine one of Shri Acharyaji. Shri Govardhandhar always remained pleased with him. Therefore, the vārttā of Krishnadas has no limit. Thus his vārttā is indescribable — how far can one speak?

Thus ends the 84 Vaishnava Stories which were revealed by Shri Gokulnathji

Their inner sentiment (Bhav) was explained by Shri Hariraiji

राग बहाग -

भरोसो दुढ़ इन चरनन केरो। श्रीवल्लभ नख चन्द्र छटा बनु सब जगमांझ अँधेरो॥

साधन और नाहीं या क लमें जासों होत नवेरो। 'सूर' कहा कहे द् व वध आंधरो बना मोल को चेरो॥

Raag Bihag -

Have firm faith in the lotus feet of Shrimad Vallabhacharya and take refuge in them, for

without the radiance of the moon-like nails of these divine feet, the entire world appears

to be in darkness.

In this Kaliyug, there is no other means by which a soul can cross over the ocean of

worldly existence. Surdas says, “I have become blind in both ways i.e., worldly and

spiritual, yet even so, I am your servant without price.”